

Impact of Murali-Based Spiritual Intervention on Alcohol Dependence: A Community-Based Observational Study

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Abstract:

Alcohol dependence remains a persistent socio-health issue affecting not only individuals but also families and communities. Conventional de-addiction methods often focus on medical and psychological interventions; however, spiritual approaches have gained increasing attention as complementary strategies. This study explores the impact of Murali-based spiritual teachings, as practiced in the Brahma Kumaris tradition, on individuals with alcohol addiction.

A community-based observational study was conducted involving ten participants identified through informal social networks. Participants attended daily morning sessions consisting of Murali discourse, guided reflection, and supportive group interaction over a period of six months. Initial engagement was facilitated through rapport-building and supportive incentives such as free breakfast. Behavioral and emotional changes were documented through continuous observation and informal interviews.

Results indicated significant positive changes, including reduced alcohol consumption, improved interpersonal relationships, enhanced emotional stability, and increased self-awareness. Participants demonstrated improved hygiene, communication skills, and family engagement. The findings suggest that structured spiritual discourse combined with community support may serve as an effective complementary intervention in managing alcohol dependence.

This study highlights the potential of low-cost, community-driven spiritual programs in promoting behavioral transformation and holistic well-being.

Keywords: Alcohol dependence, Murali, spiritual intervention, Brahma Kumaris, community health, behavioral change

1. Introduction

Alcohol addiction is a major public health concern worldwide, contributing to physical illness, mental health disorders, domestic conflict, and economic instability. In many socio-economically challenged communities, alcohol dependence also leads to intergenerational distress, affecting women and children disproportionately.

While medical detoxification and counseling are widely used, relapse rates remain high. This has led researchers to explore alternative and complementary approaches, including spirituality-based interventions. Spirituality has been associated with improved self-regulation, emotional resilience, and purpose in life.

The Brahma Kumaris, a global spiritual organization, emphasize Raja Yoga meditation and daily teachings known as "Murali." These teachings focus on self-awareness, moral values, and inner transformation. Anecdotal evidence suggests that regular engagement with Murali classes may positively influence behavior and lifestyle.

This study aims to systematically observe and document the effects of Murali-based spiritual sessions on individuals struggling with alcohol addiction in a community setting.

2. Objectives of the Study

2.1 Primary Objective

To examine the impact of Murali-based spiritual teachings on behavioral and emotional changes among individuals with alcohol dependence.

2.2 Secondary Objectives

- To assess changes in alcohol consumption patterns
- To observe improvements in interpersonal relationships and family interactions
- To evaluate changes in self-perception, confidence, and emotional stability
- To explore the role of group support and spiritual engagement in addiction recovery

3. Methodology

3.1 Study Design

This study employed a qualitative observational design based on community engagement and longitudinal monitoring over six months.

3.2 Study Setting

The study was conducted at a local yoga and meditation center, with guidance from a nearby Brahma Kumaris center.

3.3 Participant Selection

Participants were identified through informal social interactions with women working as domestic helpers in the residential area. These women reported alcohol-related issues among their spouses or acquaintances.

Ten individuals with known alcohol dependency voluntarily agreed to participate in the program.

3.4 Recruitment Process

Participants were initially invited through a social gathering (a family function), where informal discussions about alcohol addiction and support opportunities were introduced. Follow-up communication led to voluntary enrollment.

3.5 Intervention

Phase 1: Engagement (Week 1)

- Friendly interaction and trust-building
- Introduction to Murali teachings
- Motivational discussions
- Provision of free breakfast to encourage attendance

Phase 2: Structured Murali Sessions (Weeks 2–4)

- Daily morning sessions at 7:00 AM
- Selected Murali messages focusing on self-worth, discipline, and inner peace
- Group discussions and reflection

Phase 3: Standard Murali Practice (Months 2–6)

- Regular Murali sessions as per Brahma Kumaris guidelines
- Continued group interaction and emotional support
- Encouragement for consistent attendance

3.6 Data Collection Methods

- Direct observation
- Informal interviews
- Participant self-expression during group discussions
- Feedback from family members (where available)

3.7 Ethical Considerations

Participation was voluntary. No coercion was applied. Confidentiality of participants was maintained. The intervention was non-invasive and supportive in nature.

4. Results

4.1 Attendance and Participation

All ten participants attended regularly during the initial month, with sustained participation observed over the six-month period.

4.2 Behavioral Changes

4.2.1 Reduction in Alcohol Consumption

Participants reported a noticeable decline in visits to local alcohol outlets. During the initial month, none of the participants reportedly visited toddy shops.

4.2.2 Improved Personal Hygiene

Participants began wearing clean, often white clothing, reflecting increased self-respect and discipline.

4.2.3 Enhanced Communication

A marked improvement in listening skills and communication patterns was observed. Participants became more attentive and respectful in conversations.

4.3 Emotional and Psychological Changes

4.3.1 Reduction in Aggression

Incidents of quarrels and use of harsh language decreased significantly.

4.3.2 Increased Emotional Expression

Participants became more open in sharing personal struggles, indicating increased trust and emotional safety.

4.3.3 Improved Self-Confidence

Initial signs of inferiority and rigidity were replaced with flexibility and confidence.

4.4 Social and Family Impact

4.4.1 Improved Family Relationships

Participants reported better communication and reduced conflict within families.

4.4.2 Social Behavior

Participants began interacting positively within the community, often smiling and engaging more openly.

4.5 Cognitive Changes

Participants shifted their focus from alcohol-centered thinking to:

- Personal growth
- Health awareness
- Children's education
- Future planning

5. Discussion

The findings suggest that Murali-based spiritual intervention can play a significant role in behavioral transformation among individuals with alcohol dependence.

The success of the intervention can be attributed to several factors:

5.1 Spiritual Cognitive Restructuring

Murali teachings emphasize self-identity as a peaceful and powerful being. This shift in self-perception may reduce dependency behaviors.

5.2 Routine and Discipline

Daily morning sessions introduced structure and purpose, replacing idle time often associated with substance use.

5.3 Community Support

Group participation fostered a sense of belonging and accountability.

5.4 Non-Judgmental Environment

Participants felt accepted and supported, which encouraged openness and sustained engagement.

5.5 Motivational Reinforcement

Initial incentives such as breakfast helped establish routine attendance, which later became self-driven.

6. Limitations of the Study

- Small sample size (n=10)
- Lack of quantitative measurement tools
- Absence of control group
- Reliance on self-reported and observational data
- Potential researcher bias due to close involvement

7. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that Murali-based spiritual teachings, when delivered in a supportive community environment, can significantly influence behavioral and emotional outcomes among individuals with alcohol dependence.

The intervention not only reduced alcohol-related behaviors but also enhanced overall quality of life, including family relationships, self-confidence, and social engagement.

Spiritual approaches such as this may serve as effective complementary strategies alongside conventional addiction treatment methods, especially in resource-limited settings.

8. Recommendations

- Larger-scale studies with control groups should be conducted
- Integration of spiritual interventions into community health programs
- Collaboration between spiritual organizations and healthcare providers
- Development of structured modules for addiction recovery

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