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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF SADHANA IN ENHANCING SOME DIMENSIONS  
OF SELF-ACTUALIZATION AND REDUCING  
THE ANXIETY OF UNWED MOTHERS

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed to determine the effectiveness of Sadhana (a form of therapeutic prayer) in enhancing some dimensions of self-actualization and reducing the anxiety of ten unwed mothers.

It was hypothesized that: There will be significant difference between the experimental and control groups' posttest results on (a) Sub-scales of Inventory of self-actualizing characteristics scales namely: Acceptance of Self, others, human nature; Autonomy and independence of culture and environment; Capacity for peak experiences; Gemeinschaftsgefühl; Interpersonal relations; Democratic character; Ethical standard; Creativeness. (b) Over-all anxiety reduction measured by the Anxiety scale questionnaire (c) ASQ Scales; namely covert; overt; Q<sub>3</sub> (Low Self Control); C (Emotional instability); L (Suspicion); O (Apprehension); Q<sub>4</sub> (Tension). This study also aimed to determine the participants' self-rating on the following: Self acceptance; acceptance of others; the inner strength to face the problems; the peace and joy which they experience from the program; self



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confidence; creativity; stability of mind and peak experience.

A randomized pretest - posttest design was employed in the experimental research. Analysis of Covariance (ANCOVA) using pretest, as covariate was used to determine the significance of the difference between the post test results of the experimental and control groups.

The findings were as follows: (1) As against the prediction, subjects who underwent the Sadhana program did not show significantly higher posttest scores than the control group on all the self-actualizing characteristics studied. They did show significantly higher scores on only 2 characteristics: Democratic character and Ethical Standard. (2) As predicted, subjects who underwent the Sadhana Program differed significantly from the control group in their posttest scores on the over-all anxiety scale. (3) As predicted, subjects who underwent the Sadhana Program differed significantly from the control group in their posttest scores on the Covert (A) and Overt (B) scales and the following sub-scales: Low Self



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Control, Suspicion, Apprehension and Tension. (4) The evaluation results showed weighted means ranging from 3.5 to 4.9 which fell within the descriptive evaluation of high on the following areas: Self-acceptance; Acceptance of others; Inner strength to face the problem; Peace and joy; Self-Confidence; creativity and stability of mind.

Based on the above results the researcher concluded that the Sadhana Program is effective in enhancing Democratic Character and Ethical Standard and in reducing anxiety.

The researcher also made the following recommendations based on her findings: (1) A delayed posttest 3-6 months after the program could be made to check the stability of the gain scores. (2) A survey of the needs and problems of subjects could be made before implementing the program. (3) Individual counseling/consultation could be introduced along with the Sadhana Program to resolve factors that may hinder some from entering into experimental prayer. (4) The facilitator should recognize and experience the beauty of Sadhana Program in her/his own life and have sufficient knowledge





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in prayer therapy and counseling. (5) The participants should appreciate 'prayer of the heart' in their life.

(6) The guidance counselors could try the Sadhana Program along with individual/group counseling especially with those clients who suffer from low self-esteem, loneliness, insecurity, bitterness and anxiety. (7) After the researcher has conducted the session, it would be advisable for participants to undergo these sessions by themselves as many times as possible. (8) After answering the pre-test and knowing their strengths and weaknesses, it might be better for them to set goals for themselves and try to work on them within the setting and nature of each session.

