

POTENTIAL BENEFIT OF SENAM RESILIENSI TO ENHANCE SENIORS' RESILIENCE

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Abstract

Senam Resiliensi (SR), rooted from CFQ (Cosmic Freedom Qigong), was developed by Hiew (2001) and has not been examined its usefulness for seniors. Hence, the current research is an empirical field work which attempt to examine its potential in enhancing seniors' resilience. Fifty five seniors (28 male, 27 female, 57 – 87 years old) in a senior home were given the SR training for one month by certified trainers. Result shows a significant improvement on the seniors' state of resilience ($t = 2.712$; $p < .05$) and resilience trait ($t = 2.440$; $p < .05$). Further research on the potential benefit of SR is still in progress. Continued research of SR for seniors is needed due to its potential benefit in enhancing their resilience state and traits.

Keywords: Senam Resiliensi, Qigong, resilience, senior

Introduction

During the human life span, we may find some risk factors in infancy, childhood, and adolescence (such as chronic poverty, prenatal stress, parental psychopathology and family dysfunction, disabilities, teenage pregnancy, incarceration, and drug abuse), turning points at critical time periods in early adulthood (ages from 17 to 30), and mediating factors such as ethnic identity, problem solving communication, and hardiness can lead to positive adaptation in midlife at age 40 (including family relationships, employment, life satisfaction and mental and physical health). If we notice, the current state of late adulthood depends mainly on the previous life stage experiences.

As a consequence of stages in life, the elderly are often viewed to suffer from inevitable declines in their physical and psychological fitness due to aging and sickness. Losing the ability to perform daily activities is the landmark of the elderly. This has brought consequence to them, being brought to senior house or increasing dependence to others. The link between physical health and psychological health has been documented in abundant documents.

Individuals with abundant positive emotions correlates positively with their physical health (Ong & Bergeman, 2004). Further, An emerging adult literature suggests that individual differences in psychological resilience may account for the adaptive ways in which life stressors are encountered, managed, and transformed. Ong, Bergeman, Bisconti, and Wallace (2006) suggests that traits with functional properties associated with positive emotions (e.g., psychological resilience) may serve to strengthen resistance to stress by affording greater access to positive emotional resources, which, in turn, may help to provide a momentary respite from ongoing stressful experiences.

Thus, to have psychological resilience: trait and state resilience is important point in life. The larger literature on adult resilience suggests that the everyday stressors that accumulate in late adulthood provide a compelling context in which to investigate positive outcomes in response to challenge (Ong & Bergeman, 2004). Resilient late adulthood might be accomplished when the elders have effective self management and coping skills. One technique to have effective self management skills is through practicing qigong. In Qigong techniques, the key concept is management of mind and body. The specific Qigong technique that has been examined empirically and scientifically is CFQ (Cosmic Freedom Qigong) which was developed by Profesor Chok Hiew from University of New Brunswick, Canada.

A wide range of benefits of practicing qigong has been reported in the following area: cancer, fibromylgia, trauma, resilience, etc.

The CFQ has been examined its effectiveness in various populations characteristics. However, there is no study about CFQ effectiveness in a late adulthood population. In 2009, Tarumanagara University collaborated with Profesor Chok Hiew, initiated a research examining the effectiveness of CFQ in adulthood population.

The term of CFQ is difficult to be used in Indonesian context. Therefore the research team, after obtaining permission from Prof. Chok Hiew, used the term of Senam Resiliensi as the name of specific techniques developed based on CFQ.

Senam Resiliensi

The term senam is Indonesian term for a technique of Qigong, resiliensi is the other name of resilience. Senam Resiliensi was specific body and mind management which was developed based on CFQ. Senam Resiliensi was originally based on the CFQ (Chaoyi Fanhuan translated as Cosmic Freedom Qigong) while rooted in Eastern Buddhist and Taoist philosophy and consciousness training claims no ancient lineage as other forms of Qigong do. CFQ practise does not make claims of its efficacy based on irrefutable beliefs or unquestionable tradition. What's unique about CFQ is its "good science" or empirical approach grounded on solid theoretical underpinnings and testable assumptions. The clearly stated rationale is concretely operationalized as strategic principles and clear, easy-to-learn, procedures. That means that certain principles and practices that were traditionally "guarded secrets" in Qigong lore are demystified and transparent in CFQ.

Qigong (pronounced chi gong) is an art that has been practiced for over 5000 years. Originally, it was designed as a way of harmonizing oneself to deal with threatening life situations. Over time, the discipline became very complex. It is estimated by some sources that there are 20,000 types of Qigong practices. This Chinese practice is making its way into mainstream culture. It is even used at the Dana Farber Cancer center in Boston

A wider meaning of Qigong can be defined as a system of practical methods of dealing with emotions and thoughts or the mind. CFQ Qigong is defined as a practical method of dealing with consciousness in order to enhance our inherent resilience response and thoughts to optimize health.

CFQ Qigong was created by Master Yap Soon Yeong of Malaysia. Master Yap uses the theme to relax, be at peace and allow your vast human resilience to sort out your problems. The techniques he uses are for self-care and for teaching individuals to be self-reliant in overcoming and dealing with health problems.

CFQ Qigong consists of seven movements, as well as complementary movements. The seven movements are referred to as the hexagram dance. They can be performed in 13 to 15 minutes. CFQ Qigong does not need a lot of space, nor does it need any equipment or special

clothing. Exercises can be done standing, sitting or even laying down. Once learned they can be practiced inside or outside, on any type of surface.

To practice CFQ Qigong exercises does not require visualization at all, what is required is to perform the steps without cognitive activity. The simplicity of the steps ensures that stale tension energy has no room to hide in the body, but must flow downward and outward through the limbs. The exercises use slow, smooth movements. There is no need to ensure that breathing is coordinated with the movements. To follow these principles and procedures correctly your breathing will eventually spontaneously keep pace with the movements. In this way, you can do one thing at a time, leaving you free to focus your concerns on the movements. Performing the exercises without strength insures the smooth flow of bioenergy and blood. The prolonged practice of CFQ Qigong promotes slimming of the body with an optimal removal of undesirable body fluids, fat and waste products.

Present Study

Present study is a part of larger study examining the effectiveness of Senam Resiliensi in enhancing elders' resiliencies conducted in two cities (Jakarta and Solo) in Indonesia which is still in progress. In the mean time, results from the study showed the effectiveness of Senam Resiliensi. The current study is a small part of the whole part study in Jakarta, and reported the result of phase 1 of the two phases of intervention.

Study in Jakarta involving two senior homes. Senior Home 1 was the experimental group. They were given Senam Resiliensi three times a week by the researchers' group. Senior Home 2 was the control group. They were not received Senam Resiliensi by the researchers' group. Both experimental and control group received regular exercise program: Senam Lansia twice a week. Senam Lansia is a body exercise design for seniors, which the key concept is to maintain strong bones. The goal of current reported study is to examine the effectiveness of Senam Resiliensi to enhance the elders' resilience. We hypothesized that Senam Resilience gave significant increase

Method

This is planned to be a quasi experimental research in that we cannot randomly assigned the participants into both control and experimental groups.

Participants. The participants were 55 seniors (28 males and 27 females) aged 57-87 who lived in a governmental senior home, Jakarta, Indonesia.

State Resilience Checklist (SRC). Participants were administered two measures before the intervention of Senam Resiliensi. SRC is a 4 point scale consists of 18 items, developed by Hiew. In the original administration, participants responded by crossing a point the most suitable for them. In current study, since most of the participants have difficulty in reading and writing, our university students who have been trained to administer the checklist, interviewed the participants and crossed the point suitable with the participants' responses.

Trait Resilience Checklist (TRC). TRC is a 4 point scale consists of 18 items, developed by Hiew. Similar to *State Resilience Checklist (SRC)*, the administration of TRC was carried out by the trained university students.

Procedures. Procedures involved 5 phases: (1) Training of trainers; (2) Obtaining permission from gate keepers and informed-consent from the potential participants; (3) Pretest; (4) Intervention (training of Senam Resiliensi); and (5) Post-test. During the fourth phase (intervention) trainers trained the seniors Senam Resiliensi for approximately one hour in 12 sessions, three times a week (Monday, Wednesday, and Saturday), during one month (June - July 2009).

Data Analysis. Analysis was conducted using SPSS 17 for Windows release to see the mean difference (*gain scores*) of the TRC and SRC through pretest and posttest administrations. Since the data were normal in distribution, $p > 0.05$, the t-test for within subjects was administered (*parametric statistics*).

Result

Result shows that Senam Resiliensi enhanced both trait and resilience of the elderly. The study reveals that the t value is 2.712 for the SRC and it has a 2-tailed significance of $0.009 < 0.05$. This indicates that there is a significant increase in State Resilience of the elderly after practicing the Senam Resiliensi. The Trait resilience of the seniors is also increasing significantly (t value = 2.440, $p < 0.05$) after practicing the Senam Resiliensi. The significant differences in trait and state resilience of the elderly were not due to chance but by the intervention of Senam Resiliensi.

Discussion

One of the benefits of Senam Resiliensi is stress reduction and the main ingredient of practice is intention that uses the mind to guide the energy, Qi. The fluent Qi will result in better respiration, blood pressure, and heart rate variability (Yamamoto, 1997). The effect of emitted Qi has also been extended to cell cultures, growth of plants; seed germination, and reduction of tumor size

in animals (Sancier KM 1991), spiritual healing, which involves the mind, has been the subject of two volumes by Benor (Benor, D.J., 2001; Benor, D.J., 2002).

After practicing Senam Resiliensi, a detachment mechanism from negative thoughts and emotions occurred. A new attachment to healing processes began to take place as Senam Resilience practice continued. A sense of relaxed, less pain, increase in concentration and decrease in muscular inflammation were experienced by the participants.

These changes have been brought hope. Trait hope provides protective benefits by keeping negative emotion low while also contributing to adaptive recovery from stress. This is consistent with prior studies that suggest compared with those low in trait hope, high-hope individuals are, in general, less reactive to stressful situations (Chang & DeSimone, 2001; Snyder, 2002). the sustained hope, the protective factors, is an important source of resilience in later adulthood: both within and across individuals, hope appears to shape the meaning of daily stressors in ways that reduce their intensity and hinder their proliferation (Ong, Bergeman, and

Edward, 2005) The increasing protective factors give effect to more trait resilient elders. Thus, the Senam Resiliensi increases the elders' ability to rebound from adverse experience.

The resiliency model of prevention focuses on risk and protective factors. Prevention – for groups and individuals alike – is largely a matter of decreasing risks and increasing protective factors (that is, creating resilience) in the lives, families, and environments of those at risk including the lives of elderly. Senam Resiliensi, after seeing its effectiveness, provides a prevention program in that, Senam Resiliensi decreases the potential of health disturbance and vulnerability to health risk.

Resilience is the ability of individuals to remain healthy even in the presence of risk factors. Thus the Senam Resiliensi which increases the trait and state resilience can facilitate individuals in seniors home to remain healthy even in the presence of risk factors.

Senam resiliensi shifts consciousness from a physical and mental involvement to an energy (spiritual) action. Senam Resiliensi switches off the stress response perturbing the mind—the non-stop and continuous use of brain and body faculties that produces the chain effect of thrills and pains. With mind liberated and body aware, energy flow is restored, and the body's system reclaims the primordial intelligence (spirit). Mind, body and spirit harmonized and balanced for effective healing (Hiew, 2003).

Conclusion

The first study of the effectiveness of Senam Resiliensi has been proven scientifically and empirically effective in enhancing the state and trait resilience of the seniors in senior home.

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