



The Concept Of Iyama And Niyama As Ethical Guidelines For Human Psycho – Spritual Development And Well – Being: A Perspective Based On Tirumantiram

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Abstract: This research attempts to examine how the Tirumantiram has explained the basics of spiritual life as Iyama and Niyama. The Tirumantiram is a spiritual book that contains scientific concepts. This book, which consists of nine tantras, contains various concepts for social life. The Attanga Yoga path serves not only the foundation of spirituality but also promotes physical and mental development. Thirumoolar emphasizes human behavioral characteristics especially through Iyama and Niyama. The author, who refers to both of these as the fundamental of spiritual development, also discusses their importance in achieving spiritual maturity. While Yoga has explained the basics of human development through ethics, it also establishes as foundation for human perfection. This study is structured using descriptive research methodology and a behavioral approach to analyze the Tirumantiram.

Index Terms: Tirumantiram, Attanga yoga, Iyama, Niyama, Human behavior, Well-being.

I.Introduction:

Although there are many literary sources that express the concepts of Yoga; The Yoga Sutra and the Tirumantiram have a unique distinction. The first person to give a very detailed and clear explanation about yoga in Tamil was Thirumoolar. The Tirumantiram which has the dual nature of Sastram and Thotiram, has a different nature from other sacred literature. All nine Tantras in the Tirumantiram contain spiritually oriented ideas.

Thirumoolar has expressed the basics of spiritual life in his hymns. He has given valuable ideas that can strengthen human life even before the time when the life structures of an ancient society were collapsed and the dominance of religions began to prevail. He has emphasized the need for spiritual life to be purified both internally (Agam) and externally (Puram) through various sub-headings in the First Tantra. Why it is necessary to mention the cosmic objects and state their impermanence in the First Tantra itself? There is room to assume that he said to convey the meaning of human life and by discussing on what is impermanent, the basic ideas of human well-being were emphasized.

Various topics such as Theological myths, Fertility, Types of Souls and their nature, Achievements of Attanga yoga, Mantras and the systems of the chakras that shape and stabilize the mantras, Methods of worship and their uses, The four types of Mukti, for those who have heard the three virtues, the accomplishments they need to attain, The technique of suppressing the five senses, semen retention, good advice to be followed by those who follow the path of Shiva, attachment to Shiva, and Shiva-bogam are explained through each tantra.

II.Objective:

The primary objective of this research is to explore the role of ethical guidelines of Attanga yoga, specifically Iyama and Niyama in the context of how, yoga influences the mental and spiritual development

III.Hypothesis:

"The Tirumantiram is one of the historical sources for understanding the culture of Saiva society, which expressed the generalities of spirituality. Among the Eight limbs of yoga, the first two limbs Iyama and Niyama are seen as the initial roots of psycho-spiritual development." is the hypothesis of this research.

IV.Tirumantiram:

Tirumantiram is the tenth of the twelve chapters of Thirumurai (Panniru Thirumurai). Thirumantram has two-faceted, one is a thotraviyalpu and the other is a Satraviyalpu. From other Thirumurai it is unique; Thirumantram also has the distinction of containing multiple realities within itself. This is the first Tamil book to explore yoga psychology in Tamil and to highlight yoga achievements as means for spiritual liberation.

The Tirumantiram is considered as the essence of the Sivagamas. It is said that in Thevaram and Thiruvasaka Thirumurai, the Vedic material is found to be superior and the Agama material is inferior and in the Tirumantiram the Agama material is superior and the Vedic material is inferior. (Aarumugathamilan,Karu,2011:13) It is also called the Senthamil Sivagamam, which is a combination of Tantra, Mantra and Upadesha.

Thirumoolar is a spiritual scientist, and the ideas expressed in all nine tantras are scientific. It is appropriate to refer to this book as a book of knowledge, as it demonstrates the essential role of spirituality in achieving complete human life and its clarity in explaining the basic elements of spiritual life.

Moral values are the basic of spirituality. Although spiritual life leads towards a complete life in terms of human well-being, its basic principles and rules of conduct consist in following Iyama and Niyama. When the soul is corrected and regulated, the spiritual life will reach its proper goal. Such inner mental practices direct the external behavior of man in a state of transformation called Sublimation. Today's psychologists also study the human mind and suggest that it has a life nature combined with spirituality. Based on this, the following can be identified as goals of spiritual regulation.

- Identifying and correcting social obstacles
- Teaching that the Supreme Being is the highest being.
- Encouraging people to fulfill social duties through the contemplation of God.
- Revealing the effort to find peace in this world and the next.
- Making them realize that the coordinated functioning of the body and mind contributes to spirituality.
- Encouraging them to develop positive thoughts.
- Clarifying what is the true self of souls.
- Developing noble qualities among humans.
- Making them care about the benefits of worship, rituals, and lifestyles.
- Realizing the potentials embedded in humans.
- Eliminating social contradictions.
- Helping to develop the security of society and religion,
- Increasing God-soul connections.

- Emphasizing the benefits of rebirth.
- Making them realize the higher goal of souls.
- Realizing the greatness, meaning, and purpose of human existence.

such goals are the foundations of spiritual life. The science of psychology, which has spread throughout the world today, did not initially approach spirituality in a close way. The need for spirituality for the process of mentalization was realized in the field of Hinduism. That is why Toynbee was afraid that Western civilization would soon perish if it did not absorb spiritual philosophies. Based on this, it is clear that physical purity and the moral concepts built through it are the basis of spiritual life. Thirumoolar has clarified this based on the two structures of Attanga Yoga, namely Iyama and Niyama.

Generally, when approached historically, all societies and religions seek meaning for human existence. Or have tried hard to search for it. They are available in the form of literature as empirical concepts. In Indian culture, scriptures expressing spiritual ideas have emerged from time to time and guided man. They have provided various teachings on man's spiritual journey. They have influenced the entire course of man's existence. In this series of scriptures, the Tirumantiram can be put forward as the first book that explained human psychology in a spiritual context.

V.Attanga Yoga:

When we start to engage in the research on Yoga, the concepts of the Tirumantiram provide the depth of the research on them. The third tantra of the Tirumantiram deals with the Attanga yoga. The Attanga yoga consists of eight limbs, which are intended to attain the spiritual enlightenment. The Tirumantiram also point out the eight limbs of Yoga with the word 'Praiccatam' (Uraittāṇa vaṅkari oṅṅu mūṭiya niraitta irāci niraimuṅṅai eṅṅip piraccatam eṅṅum pēciyē nanti...-Tirumanti- ram: 549). In this section, Attanga Yoga is mentioned and its first two aspects are considered as the basis for spirituality in relation to the transformation of the soul. However, first let us look at a brief explanation of Yoga.

Yoga is a combination of a detailed study of the mind, various achievements that arise from mental energy, control of mind-body, actions, and harmony between nature and man, etc. Therefore, it is also called 'Science of mind'.

Yoga is understood in two ways: Joining or Separation. Separation is detachment from worldly relationships that cause the suffering for living beings. Joining refers to the union of Soul with the Supreme Being; this means that souls are freed from worldly relationships and merge with the Supreme Being.

Thirumoolar, says in his hymns that he sits under the Sacred Bodhi Tree of Thiruvavaduthurai sthalam (The Bodhi Tree, here the sprawling banyan tree in the western direction of the Thiruvavaduthurai sthalam is called Shivabodhi) reciting the Panchakshara Mantras to merge with lord Shiva. This song is a good proof that he was a great yogi (Cerntirun- tenciva mankaitan pankanaic... - Tirumantiram:79).

Therefore, the union of soul with the Supreme Soul can be called yoga. Yajnavalkiyar states that the word yoga refers to the 'Spiritual Union' of Soul and the Supreme Being.

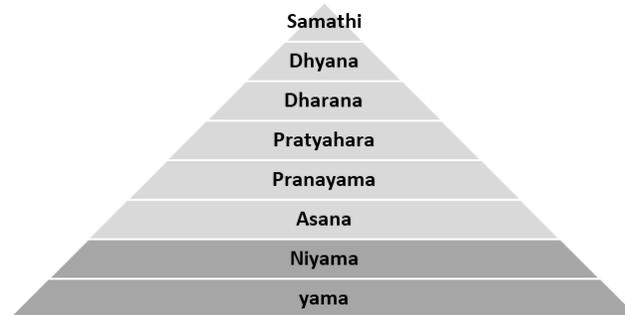
“Yoga is the union of the individual self (jivatma)

With the supreme self (paramatma, brahman)”

(Yoga Yajnavalkya: 1.43)

The eight limbs of yoga are mentioned in the second chapter of the Yoga Sutra, Sadhana Pada (Yoga Sutra: 2.29). The Tirumantiram explains these eight limbs in the third Tantra (Tirumantiram: 552). Iyama, Niyama, Adhana (Asanam), Pranayama, Pratyakara, Dharana, Dhyana (Meditation) and Samadhi are the eight limbs of yoga. Of these, the first four are internal and external, while the last four are internal only. The first four limbs pave the way for the next four limbs of Pratyakara, Dharana, Dhyana and Samadhi to be well-developed. Each of these limbs is closely related to each other. The eight limbs are mentioned in the path of yoga as the

means to free the soul from worldly ties or to achieve spiritual enlightenment. These eight types of paths were also explained by Nandhiyem Perumanar. According to Thirumoolar, they pave the way for the elimination of evil and the attainment of righteousness. Asana, Pranayama, and Dhyana (Meditation) improve well-being in the body, mind, society, and spiritual state. They are not only influential in individual personality development and health, but also in mental health treatment methods. Today, Yoga therapy has developed well. The role of Yoga medicine is immense in preventing diseases and curing existing diseases. Yoga therapy methods play a major role in preventive treatment.



The mantra comments on the eight principles as 'Iyama Niyamame itself is of innumerable Adhanam' (Iyama Niyamame ennila Athanam... - Tirumantiram:552). Here, the importance of Iyama, Niyama is emphasized by the word 'Iyama Niyamame'. These are taken as the basic qualifications for the perfection of one's yogic lifestyle. Iyama and Niyama are the qualities presented based on human behavior.

Iyama and Niyama are the ethical elements presented based on human behavior. Therefore, both of them are related to human characteristics. Based on these characteristics,

- Improvement through ethical principles
- Improvement of physical activity patterns
- Focusing the mind
- Developing mental development
- Trying to gain spiritual knowledge
- Realizing oneself
- Realizing the values of life
- Achieving the ultimate goal

these are the benefits of Attanga Yoga. There are many ways to obtain divine grace. But Thirumoolar has guided us by saying that if we follow the path of Attanga Yoga and stand in Samadhi, we can attain unity in wisdom (Anneri inneri ennātathu aṭṭānka...-Tirumantiram: 551).

VI.Iyama and Niyamas:

Among the eight limbs mentioned in the Tirumantiram, it can be observed that deep psychological processes unfold in the first two limbs, Iyama and Niyama. Psychological concepts developed by today's psychologists are found in the Thirumantram and other yogic texts.

Iyama- Common Virtue of Exclusion or Restraints (Social Discipline)

Niyama – The best Virtue to be cultivated or Observance (Individual Discipline)

Iyama and Niyama serves as the foundation and guiding principles of the yogi's life. They are seen as the initial stages to reach higher state of consciousness, namely Dharana, Dhyana (Meditation) and Samadhi. Iyama and Niyama are the foundations of spiritual goal of which the supreme power of Samadhi is built. Only when these are strong and deep, the stages of the development can function well and reach the ultimate goal and also the processes of spiritual growth raised upon them can be kept safe and firm.

Iyamas are seen as commands that control and regulate the mind from going into evil. Niyamas are the rules of conduct that apply to individual discipline. Both of these influences the transformation of man into a being of perfection based on values.

Attaining virtue is the main goal of spirituality. Yama and Niyama are mentioned as the basis for it. Behavioral psychologists define psychology as the scientific research on the behavior of animals and humans. They emphasized that the observable behavioral patterns of humans and animals should be the subject of psychological study. Human behavior is formed according to the impulses of thoughts. Where inappropriate behaviors are identified, they are redirected through teachings. This is what is being carried out in the present days as forms of psychological support, Psychological counseling, Guidance and Counseling.

Iyamas are seen as ethical disciplines that control and regulate the mind from going into evil. The word '*Iyamam*' has been used to refer to a common virtue that is universal and applicable to all, regardless of society, country, race, language, caste, or gender.

Iyama is mentioned in two hymns in Tirumantiram. In the first hymns, the importance of iyama is emphasized and in the second hymns, what are the ways of iyamas, he has shown. He calls these '*Chezhunthan Niyamankal*' (*Eluntunīr peyyiṇum eṭṭut ticaiyuñ celunta ṇiyamaṅkaḷ...-Tirumantiram:553*). Even if destructions occur due to nature, he has advised to '*do the Chezhunthan Niyamankal*'. Here, the myth of the incident where the Lord taught virtue to the four is mentioned and through it, we can see that the *Chezhunthan Niyamankal* are understood. It is encouraged to follow (*Kollāṅpoy kūṛāṅ kaḷavilāṅ eṅkuṇaṅ...- Tirumanitram:554*).

Niyamas are rules of conduct applicable to individual discipline. Niyamas indicate excellent virtues that can be followed by everyone (*Tirumantiram: 556*). He who has realized and known the Supreme Being within himself is a '*Niyamathttan*'. Realization of self is the basis of spirituality. He emphasizes (*.....nēmiyī raintu niyamatta ṇām. - Tirumantiram: 556*) that self-realization is necessary to eliminate the excluded and to observe eternal morals.

Tirumoolar mentions ten Iyama and ten Niyamas. But Sage Patanjali mentions five yamas as negative virtues: non-killing (*ahimsa*), non-lying (*satyam*), non-stealing (*astheyam*), non-lust (*brahmachariya*), non-greed (*aparahirakam*) and mentions five Niyamas as positive virtues: purity (*sauca*), truthfulness (*sandosa*), penance (*tapas*), study of scriptures (*svatyaya*), Devotion to God (*isvarapranidhana*). But it is worth noting that Thirumoolar has added five more iyamas and niyamas for spiritual growth and self realization. However, both iyama and niyama have an influence on transforming or directing a person into a person with complete virtue based on values.

IYAMAS (Restraints)
(Tirumantiram: 554)

1. Non-killing (Kollamai),
2. Truthfulness (poiymai),
3. Non-stealing (Kallamai),
4. Steadfastness (En Gunan),
5. Patience (Adakkamudamai),
6. Honesty (Nadunilamai),
7. Food Control (Pakuththu Unnuthal),
8. Purity (maasuillamai),
9. Absence of alcoholism,
10. Lust Control (Kaamaminmai).

NIYAMAS (Observance)
(Tirumantiram: 556)

1. Purity (Thooimai),
2. Compassion (Arul),
3. Food Control (Oon Surukkam),
4. Patience (Porai-udamai),
5. Honesty (Nermai),
6. Truthfulness (Vaaymai),
7. Neutrality(Naduvunilamai),
8. Lust Control, (Kaamaminmai)
9. Non- stealing (Kallamai),
10. Non-killing (Kollamai)

The above mentioned two components form the foundation of human development and spirituality by cultivating positive behavior and character. As an example, let us look at some ethical elements here. The first level of Iyama is Non-killing (*Kollamai*). Non-killing means '*not killing other living beings.*' It is one of the appropriate flowers for the worship of Shiva, the supreme leader of wisdom, says Thirumoolar (*Parrāya narkuru pūcaikkum paṇmalar Tirumantiram:197*).

The negative concept of non-killing emphasizes the principle of non-violence - love. This word is 'a' - not, 'violence' - suffering. Therefore, non-violence indicates something that is not killing or that is not violent or that does not cause suffering. Thus, the word Non-Killing is said to be positive meaning. That is 'love'. That is why Love is shown as '*Love and Shiva are one*' (*Anpum Shivamum Irandalla,- Tirumantiram:270*). This love embraces all creation. It also forms the basis for developing all the qualities such as unity, harmony and understanding within oneself. Love resides in the human mind and is not like a tool held in one's hand. Thus, the mind melts with love, only those who worship with devotion will get the blessings of God (Enpē virakā iraicci aruttiṭṭup... - *Thirumantram: 272*) and the necessity of love has also been emphasized.

The first tantra of Tirumantiram has expressed the high level of love in many ways in the section on *Anbudaimai*. If there is a lack of love that will leads a person to murder or violence. Therefore, the mantras in *Anbudamai* say that he should be a loving person and cultivate that quality within him.

Furthermore, the light will shine in the hearts of those who are humble with love, and God desiring to bestow a blissful life upon the souls, will be pleased to join hands with the Supreme Power to bestow his grace. Thus, the desires of the five senses, which cause suffering to the souls in this world, will be cut off. Therefore, he says, "Put your mind on the remembrance of God" (*Nanpuru Chinthaiyai Nadumin, Tirumantiram:282*). The desire of five senses (*Pancha ppulan*) are the basis for the suffering of souls in the world and it is because the souls are entangled by the webs of desires that's why the violence, murders or various evil acts are take place in the society. Therefore, the desire of five senses which cause sufferings can be cut by having love.

The mantra also states that the state of love itself can lead to the state of bliss. Therefore, the mantras in *Anbudamai* section have explained the roots of the spiritual dimension of the mind through the principle of Non-Killing.

Non-Falsehood is also a negative trait. Through this, truth or honesty norms are said. It signifies the character of being true inwardly and pure in speech, accordance with conscience. A harmful speech leads to one's suffering. Speaking double minded, gossiping, using obscene words, telling lies, and using unnecessary words are also forms of speech. Thirumoolar says that truth is the best way to rid ourselves of such evil forms and this is his advice ("*Yavarkku maam pirarkku Innurai Thane*" *Tirumantiram: 252*).

Non-Stealing (*Kallamai*) refers to the act of stealing. Being an activity involving the mind, this act occurs on the basis of the mental motivation of satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Whatever we steal, it leads us to suffering. This action takes place on the basis of its mental stimulation through desires. Desires are the source of everything. Thirumoolar also advises that desire to be scrutinized by “...*Aasaipadappada Aiy varunth thunpankal Aasaividavida Aananta maame*” (*Tirumantram: 2615*). If the feeling of satisfaction arises in the mind, desires for other people's things or thoughts of stealing them will not arise. Therefore, we should develop ourselves to a state of controlling the mind. This is supported by practicing such as Asana, Pranayama, and Meditation.

Today the yoga practices often focus only on Asana, Pranayama and Meditation but true essence of yoga is rooted in Iyama and Niyama. These two elements are the foundation and principles of yoga, which determines the characteristic of the yogi. Thus, this article becomes evident that Iyama and Niyama are the two fundamental principles which build the spiritual goal of human to the inner spirituality and well-being.

VII.Results and Discussion:

Today, many people mistakenly believe that yoga is limited to asana, pranayama and meditation. Yoga is a comprehensive and holistic practice that includes ethical guidelines (Iyama), personal observances (Niyama), and way of life practices, that integrates physical, mental and spiritual well-being. Incorporating yoga into daily life enhances overall well-being. Therefore, behavioral characteristics are the basic functional stages of yoga. One cannot become a yogi without good behavioral characteristics. That is why, Iyama and Niyama are said to be a foundation of yoga and spiritual growth which leads to behavioral changes and self-realization. According to the Tirumantiram, among eight limbs of Attanga yoga, two limbs namely Iyama and Niyama are the foundation of Psycho-Spiritual development and it emphasizes the importance of Iyama and Niyama in achieving Spiritual Growth, Self-Realization and Union with Divine.

The followings can be identified as the results obtained from this research:

- The Tirumantiram contains general characteristics of spirituality and steps for spiritual progress.
- Yoga contributes to the development of virtue.
- The Purify of the *Trikarana* of mind (*Manam*), speech (*vaakku*), and body (*Kaayam*).
- The ways to improve purity, etc. are explained through yoga.
- Yoga directs the personality and health of the individual through the spiritual plane.
- According to the Tirumantiram, among the eight limbs of yoga, two components namely Iyama and Niyama, are the foundations of Psycho-Spiritual Development.
- Yoga is not just asana. The foundations of yoga are Iyama and Niyama. These are also the foundations of Spirituality.
- These two limbs influence the transformation or direction of a human being into a complete being based on values.
- Iyama and Niyama determine not only the complete lifestyle of a yogi but also the spiritual lifestyle of an ordinary Human Being.

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