

Adavus As Performers Therapy

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Introduction

In the sixty-four arts of Ancient Tamils, music and dance are considered to be divine and are outstanding ones. There are various forms of both these arts. In Bharatanatyam, four types of *bani*s are in practice, Tanjore bani, Pandanainallur bani, Vazhuvoor bani, and Kancheepuram bani. Only Pandanainallur Meenakshi Sundaram Pillai bani's adavus have been taken for this therapeutic research and is presented in this article.

Objectives

Dance students, dance teachers, and professional performers face a lot of challenges both physically and mentally. Some of them include knee pain, back pain, shoulder pain, muscle spasms, joint pain, and many more. The main objective of this article is to put forward my research on how to overcome these challenges easily with the help of this divine art form.

Also, most articles based on therapeutic researches¹ have been on hasta mudras, yoga, voice modulation, body-weight loss, maintaining youthfulness, etc. But this article will focus on one particular *bani* (pandaninallur) and focus on how one *adavu* will be therapeutic for another *adavu*, thereby putting forth a new performer's therapy.

Adavu System

Tanjore Quartette put forth the *adavu* system to be taught before the *Natya urrupadigal*. The number of *adavus* changes based on each *bani*. Pandanainallur bani has been categorized into 18 divisions in which there are 60 *adavus*².

¹Tripura Kashyap, My body My wisdom a handbook of creative dance therapy, 2005

²Leema Rose, Bethlehem Kuravanji Nadana Amaivu Nutpangal, 2017, P.126.

- *Thattadavu*³ - Done by hitting the legs (feet)
- *Nattadavu*⁴ - Including hand movements with leg movements
- *Paravaladavu*⁵ - Hands, legs along with moving to the side movements
- *Kuthithu mettu adavu* – Balancing the hands and legs
- *Korvai adavu* – Includes kaarvai (,)

Similarly other *adavus* have been set by our ancestors, now we will learn about the therapeutic method in these *adavus*.

These *adavus* have been set in three speeds, first speed, second speed and third speed up and down, which itself has an inbuilt therapeutic properties beneficial for the health.

Tala System

The basic *adavus* are set to either *Adi* or *Rupaka* talas. For the purpose of therapy, the *tala* has to be handled in the following way:

<i>Adavus</i>	<i>Solkattu</i>		Speed
	<i>Right</i>	<i>Left</i>	
1. <i>Thattadavu</i>	<i>Theiya</i>	<i>Thei</i>	2 beats
2. <i>Nattadavu</i>	<i>Thei Yum</i>	<i>Thath</i>	4 beats
3. <i>Paravaladavu</i>	<i>Tha Thei Thath</i>	<i>Dith Thei Thath</i>	8 beats
4. <i>Korvai adavu</i>	<i>Thath Thei Tham ,</i> <i>Dith Thei Tham ,</i>	<i>Thath Thei Tham ,</i> <i>Thath thei Tham ,</i>	16 beats

In this way, the *adavu* beats should be set to 2,4,6,8,16, thereby steadily increasing. Understanding and practicing this way, the therapeutic factor will come into light and start working. The above mentioned *adavus*, *talas* must be understood and learnt to make this therapy beneficial.

³Saroja Vaidyanathan, The science of Bharatanatyam, 1984, p.4.

⁴Sudharani Raghupathy, Laghu Bharatham, 2002, p.182.

⁵Balasundar Raju, Nadana Adaivugal, 1993, p.20.

Therapy Method

Two different approaches have been put forward for this therapy.

1. The pain caused by an *adavu* in one division can be cured by doing another *adavu* of the same division, giving treatment for the pain. For example, the shoulder pain and back pain caused while doing third *nattadavu* can be cured by doing fifth *nattadavu*.
2. The pain caused by an *adavu* in one division can be cured by doing an *adavu* of another division. For example, the pain caused while doing first *thattadavu* can be cured by doing second *nattadavu*.

Points to be noted⁶

1. While doing the *adavus*, breathing techniques must be kept in mind and performed.

Examples:

- *Adavus* which have forward/front bending – exhalation (fifth *nattadavu*)
- Jumping *adavus*
While jumping – inhalation
While stretching the hands and legs – exhalation
(*Kathi adavu*, *Dith Theiyundha adavu*)
- *Adavus* done in *sama nilai* (straight) – breathing depends on hand and leg movements

While doing first *nattadavu*, when we stretch the right leg sideways, we pull in *natyrambam* (right shoulder), simultaneously inhalation happens. When the hand is pushed out, exhalation will complete the movement.

2. It is important to be mindful and have focus and concentration while doing.
3. For the therapy to be effective, the *kaala pramanam* must be in the right tempo. High tempo will not be effective for the therapy.

⁶Tripura Kashyap, My body My wisdom a handbook of creative dance therapy, 2005, p.122.

Implementation of the therapy in *Adavus*

1. While doing *thattadavu* continuously, one definitely faces challenges like knee pain, muscle spasms, shivering of thighs etc. *Theiya Theiyi adavu* can be done as an antidote/pain killer.
2. First *thath thei tha ha* in first speed, when done with opposite hands and legs, one can get the cure explained below. The *adavu* is set this way where, stamping both legs, *mettu*, stamping one leg, balancing the legs on toes. The same leg pattern done with hands in opposite directions will prevent stroke, blood circulation systemises, liver and *maleeral* functions effectively.
3. Body movements with the legs only also comes under *adavus*⁷. The walks used usually in dance like, *kulukku nadai*⁸, back walk, heel walk, toes walk, walking with the sides of the feet help in increasing insulin secretion for diabetic patients.

4. *Kartharee adavu X Kathi adavu*

Performing *kathi adavu* after doing *kartharee adavu*, will help to do *kathi adavu* at ease. While jumping, the body becomes bouncy like a ball and the body is within control. While stretching the legs, proves to be an antidote for knee pain and helps to reduce excess thigh muscles.

5. *Sarukal adavu X Second Theiya Theiyi*

Sarukal adavu is done by jumping in *muzhumandi* and stretching the leg backwards. Second *theiya theiyi in sama padam* by moving front.

6. *Tha hatha Jam Thari Tha*

Usually while doing this *adavu*, a sense of happiness arises within us. The *mudra* used in the *adavu - alapadma*⁹ is one of the *mudras* that gives rise to emotions

⁷Kalarani, Tanjai Valartha Bharathakalai, 2004, p.155

⁸Sudharani Raghupathy, Laghu Bharatham, 2002, p.211.

⁹Sudharani Raghupathy, Laghu Bharatham, 2002, p.211.

of sincerity and goodness. Example: happiness, sun, beauty, bloomed lotus, love, sympathy and much more.

7. *Braramaree*

While doing this *adavu*, the performer's head, hand, fingers, chest, back, feet all come into play. One must inhale while taking the spin in this *adavu*, while doing so the needed *prana vaayu* for the body is received.

8. *Kitathakatharikitathom X Seventh Thattadavu*

9. *Thath Thei Tham X Paichal Adavu*

10. *Knee pain X Uthsanga adavu*

Similarly many *adavus* can be turned into therapy. While doing these *adavus*, eye movements play a major role, through this short sighted and long sight can be effectively cured. Taking a bath after applying oil is also an effective therapy.

Conclusion

Through my research and experience , I have discovered that my pain caused because of *Adavus* can be relieved by performing another contradictory *Adavus*. While practicing *adavus*, with the *drshti bhedas*, it itself has therapy inbuilt in it and is beneficial for the body, especially eyes. This Article highlights three features: learning process, healing process and body fitness when the basic *adavus* that are fully understood and put in proper practice. The pains which are felt and not felt by our body can be effectively cured by this therapy. Unnecessary creams, tablets, and mental stress can be avoided through this divine art form for good health, and following what our ancestors have given us is the objective of this article.

Bibliography

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