

Essay

Scientific Analysis of Siddhis

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Abstract

Humanity is facing a number of serious existential challenges such as global warming, renewable energy, desalination, and the like. Hidden in the fundamental understanding of siddhis may well lie the recipe for tackling these challenges and this is the primary reason for the author's interest in the topic. Scientific corroboration of siddhis is tantamount to proving that nonphysical forces are capable of creating physical reality and the proof will lead to a second Copernican Revolution in Science. It will also bring the glory of ancient science back to India.

Keywords: Siddhis, scientific analysis, humanity, Copernican revolution.

For millennia, sages have counseled that rising on the scale of internal excellence (see Appendix for an explanation of internal excellence) should be the sole aim of life. Siddhis are but a side show, a distraction, and a side-effect of the progress in this pursuit. All siddhis involve materialization of specific intentions. They are also examples of nonphysical forces creating physical reality. Materialization of intentions involves connecting to the source with a specific process.

William I. Tiller is perhaps the first among Western scientists to experimentally show that nonphysical forces can create physical reality [1]. His experiments showed that the measured value of pH of water could be changed by intention and meditation without adding any chemicals [1].

Science is the appropriate branch of knowledge to use when the fundamentals of the system under scrutiny are well understood. Systemic, meaning data-driven methodologies, are appropriate when the fundamentals of the system are not well understood but measurements are available and data can be procured. One such systemic methodology goes by the name six sigma, developed at Motorola by the late Bill Smith and the late Mikel J. Harry in the seventies. By now, some 80% of Fortune 100 Companies and 50% of Fortune 500 companies reportedly have six sigma programs in place. When measurement systems are unavailable or when there are uncertainty issues with the measurement, then, direct perception, as with meditation, or another way of increasing the focus of attention, is the only route to new discoveries. But, as Jim Kowall,

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a physician and physicist, cautions, discoveries made through direct perception must nonetheless meet the rigor of logical consistency.

How ancient sages developed knowhow of siddhis. Siddhis are a product of the intuitive mind (yogic processes and meditation and direct perception) and as such it cannot be understood with the rational approaches such as science. Counseled Albert Einstein, “*The rational mind is a faithful servant and the intuitive mind is a scared gift. We have created a society that worships the servant and has forgotten the gift*”. Trying to wrap our rational minds around siddhis is a futile exercise. Rather, the inquiry should focus on whether a specific yogic process leads to the purported outcome and this is a six sigma problem. The author’s six sigma text [2] explains the what, why, and how of six sigma.

Connecting to the Source. After interacting with dozens of renowned physicists including the late John A. Wheeler, a physicist and the late Stephen Hawking, Amanda Gefter reached an important conclusion: At the beginning, there was absolutely nothing, a void [3]. So, what caused *nothing* to change into *something*, the universe, some 13.8 billion years ago? Some scientists suggest that the universe is a self-excited circuit not requiring anything for it to come into existence. This hypothesis is a dead-end for it cannot be tested. Kowall suggests that the desire of the void, he termed undifferentiated consciousness, is what created the universe [4]. This hypothesis can be tested. Here is how.

All seven-and-a-half billion of us have consciousness, let us call it differentiated consciousness, to distinguish it from the undifferentiated consciousness of the void. This means that we are a microcosm of the undifferentiated consciousness (*I am that*). Furthermore, everything continues to remain connected at some level although not physically linked just as it was at the moment of the Big Bang when the universe was about the size of Planck length (10^{-33} cm in diameter). How could it not be? This implies that we all must be connected at some level although not physically linked and connected to the source. Western scientists have conducted numerous experiments showing that everything remains connected to everything else just as it was at the moment of the Big Bang. This line of reasoning offers a plausible explanation for our creating capacity (siddhis) by connecting to the source, the undifferentiated consciousness. After all, this is how the universe was created. What to create depends on the intention of the seeker and how to create requires a process. There are numerous examples of individuals connecting to the source resulting in breakthrough discoveries.

The work of mathematical genius, S. Ramanujan, is a stunning consequence of connecting to the source. Barely a high school graduate, Ramanujan would write down complex mathematical theorems and their proofs without knowing the steps in between. Asked by his mentor, Prof. G. S. Hardy at Cambridge how he does that, Ramanujan replied, *Goddess Habaki speaks to me*. It is clear, he must have connected to the source. The breakthrough discoveries of Albert Einstein and other great scientists suggest that they too must have (unknowingly) connected. The profound knowledge and wisdom of ancient sages, which could not possibly have been sourced from

previous knowledge, must be a direct consequence of successfully connecting to the source. Connecting to the source may hold the key to the solution of perplexing problems for all the data, information, facts, etc., already there waiting to be downloaded.

All siddhis involve a process. One issue with Siddhis is the problem of repeatability and reproducibility. Another issue is skepticism owing to credibility and trustworthiness of the Siddha and this is where the work of Yogananda Paramahansa (1893 – 1952) assumes significance. Born in 1893, the year Swami Vivekanda gave his famous speech in Chicago, Yogananda spent half his life in the United States. He published his famous book, *Autobiography of a Yogi* in 1946. The book has been translated into fifty languages and has sold four million copies. It has received numerous favorable reviews including the New York Times, Newsweek, then Ambassador of India, B. R. Sen, and HH Shankaracharya of Kanchipuram, among many others. There is a Self-Realization Fellowship Center that Yogananda founded in virtually every major city in America and in many cities abroad. So strongly moved was Steve Jobs, co-founder of Apple, Inc., by Yogananda's work that he arranged a give a gift to everyone invited to his funeral service, and it wasn't an Apple product. Instead it was the book, *Autobiography of a Yogi*!

In his book Yogananda presents first-hand accounts of many siddhis. Also in the book are detailed accounts of his interactions with three of India's most famous individuals of all time: In one photograph Yogananda Ji is seen having lunch with Mahatma Gandhi and the account of Mahatma Gandhi asking Yogananda to teach him kriya yoga. There are also accounts of his interactions with the Nobel Laureate, Rabindranath Tagore, and the famed scientist, Jagdish Chandra Bose. It may be speculated that these interactions were included in the book to establish credibility. Also in the book there is a chapter on kriya yoga, the yogic process he followed and taught. In presenting the examples of siddhis, Yogananda makes it clear that they all siddhis involve a specific yogic process. The fact that all siddhis involve a process makes them amenable to six sigma scrutiny and analysis.

Analysis of siddhis as a six sigma problem. Once it is understood that all siddhis involve a process, it becomes possible to shed light on it with six sigma principles.

Six sigma aims at achieving the best possible performance of all repetitive processes and transactions. The best possible performance occurs when the outcome of the process exhibits minimum variance. Six sigma is founded on four natural laws:

1. Every process has an outcome by which its performance may be assessed. All outcomes are impacted by one or more causes.
2. The outcomes of all processes exhibit a certain minimum amount of inherent and unavoidable variation due to unknown or uncontrollable causes called common causes. Experience tells us that this variation often follows a well-known probability distribution (normal distribution, bell curve).

3. Variation over and above this minimum occurs due to measurement errors and discoverable causes that go by the name assignable causes.
4. Minimizing measurement errors and discovering and then fixing the assignable causes returns the outcome to its natural state where it is influenced only by common causes.
5. The five-phase, eleven-step six sigma procedure allows us to achieve performance, somewhere close to minimum variance.

Process Map of Siddhis. A process map is a graphical display of the steps that comprise the process. It shows how the work is getting done. Regardless of the mechanics, all siddhis appear to follow the process map displayed in Figure 1.

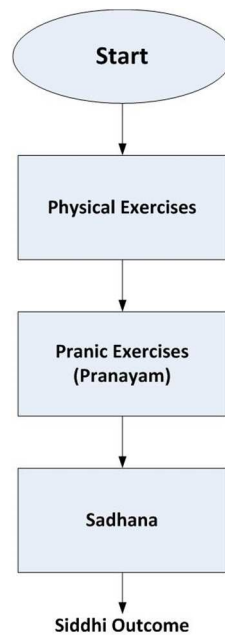


Figure 1. Generalized Process Map of Siddhis

Uncontrollable and Unknown Causes. In manufacturing applications, if the process is operated well and the inputs are controlled well (fairly uniform raw material quality, operating conditions, etc.), the final product quality is expected to exhibit a minimum amount of variation. This unfortunately is not the case with human beings. Consequently, the siddhi outcomes are expected to exhibit large variation. That is, if one hundred aspirants were to follow the siddhi process diligently, only a handful might achieve the desired siddhi outcome. In other words, the siddhi process suffers from repeatability and reproducibility problems. Not everyone undergoing the identical process will achieve the desired result. Furthermore, it is possible that a given individual may achieve the siddhi outcome at one time but not at another time. This is most problematic for science. Scientists will have to get used to such unexplained variation while they investigate what the root causes of defects (not achieving the siddhi outcome sought) are so that the performance could be improved. Actually, we have a plausible explanation for why such

variation occurs. Our vibrational characteristics are our true nature and they are influenced by what we inherit from our ancestors and by own actions from childhood to the current age. These factors introduce disturbances in our vibrational characteristics which in turn lead to suboptimal performance in all walks of life.

Remain steadfastly committed to driving decisions solely on the basis of data at all times except when you sit for meditation. Then, send your rational mind on a well-deserved vacation or else it will turn into your worst enemy.

Assignable Causes. In any specific siddhi process, there are three assignable causes which can lead to defects in the siddhi outcome (intention not materialized): They are (1) How each process is designed and executed. Only siddhas have the necessary know-how, (2) Chronology of the activities in each process step, and (3) Duration of each activity. Additionally, the entire process may have to be repeated a specified a certain number of times and for a specified duration or else, the desired intention may not materialize.

Examples. Confidence in the siddhis will naturally rise if supportive evidence is presented. The author has personal experience with a couple of siddhis, levitation and health and wellness. The late Maharishi Yogi introduced Transcendental Meditation [TM]TM to the world. This program appears to be inspired by Patanjali's Yoga Sutras. In his advanced program, Maharishi's followers demonstrated the notion of what they refer to as Yogic Flying. Yogic flying involves lifting from the ground and hopping forward. Videos of yogic flying may be found on the internet. In his rare interview to Larry King on CNN, Maharishi explained yogic flying thus. "Yogic flying is that level of self-referral consciousness that will materialize the intention; whatever the intention, materialize the intention". In yogic flying, the intention is to become light as cotton so that one can lift from the ground and hop. Note that levitation does not violate the law of gravity. If we make ourselves light as cotton, Newton cannot have any objection.

1. Sanjeev Aroskar's Demonstration. Sanjeev Aroskar is an electronics and computer science graduate of Indian Institute of Technology, Mumbai. The author is privileged to call him a friend. Sanjeev has enlightened the author on many yogic concepts and he has learned much about the importance of six sigma in all human pursuits. At author's request, Sanjeev gathered a group of friends/followers and successfully demonstrated the notion of lifting from the ground. In this experiment that the author has videos of, four of six participants were able to lift from the ground by pushing themselves up with their fingers, something no one will ordinarily be able to do unless they make selves light. One participant had no effect and while another could not handle the process and had to rest lying down. Sanjeev was kind enough to share his photo from an earlier experience in which he had spontaneously and momentarily lifted from the ground. This photo is shown in Figure 2. Not long ago, the author's older sister, her daughter, and her son conveyed to the author that they had seen my late mother in a levitated state, several inches from the ground on several occasions when she was in a meditative state. My mother had no knowledge of this.



Figure 2. Sanjeev Aroskar in Levitated state

2. Baba Shivanand Ji's Durga Saptashati Program for Health and Wellness. Sanjeev Aroskar and the author had the privilege of learning Baba Ji's Durga Saptashati meditation program several years ago. In his TV programs, Baba Ji presents evidence of ailments getting cured in a single session. With the photonic energy measurements, Sanjeev Aroskar and the author have been able to attest to the health and wellness benefits of Baba Ji's program. The photonic energy measurement device is based on the Gas Discharge Visualization (GDV) Principle and it is painless, noninvasive, and takes only a few minutes. The GDV technology is registered with US FDA and the EU (GDVUSA.ORG).

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Appendix A: Internal Excellence Explained

Each of the 7½ billion human inhabitants of Earth have three components of the mindset S, R, and T explained in Table I. The definition of the three components is such that everyone, from the most noble to the worst among humans, is expected to possess a minimum amount of each. The possibility of perfection (pure S), or for that matter, pure T, is thus precluded. The specific proportion of these components determines the level of internal excellence of an individual. These ideas lead to a scale of internal excellence depicted in Figure A-1(a).

Table I: Mindset Components and Human Emotions

Mindset Component	Attribute of the Mindset Component
S	Truthfulness, honesty, equanimity, steadfastness
R	Attachment, bravery, ego, ambition, greed, desire to live
T	Lying, cheating, causing injury in words or deed, sleep
Emotions	Attribute of Emotion
Positive Emotions	Unconditional love, kindness, empathy, compassion
Negative Emotions	Anger, hatred, hostility, resentment, frustration, jealousy, fear, sorrow, etc.

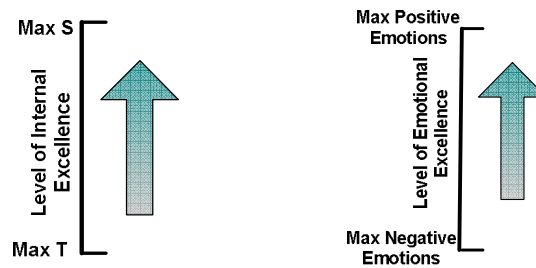


Figure A.1 Scale of Internal Excellence (Left) and Emotional Excellence (Right)

Now, human beings are endowed with two types of emotions: Positive emotions and negative emotions, also explained in Table I. Positive emotions strongly and positively correlate with high S components while negative emotions strongly and positively correlate with excessive R and T components. This realization leads to a scale of emotional excellence depicted in Figure A-1(b). The two scales are entirely equivalent. Internal excellence has nothing to do with race, caste, religion, gender, or national origin.

The noble ones among us are toward the top-end of these scales while the wicked ones towards the bottom, and the rest of us somewhere in between. The goal of life should be to rise on these scales of excellence. All Incarnations and prophets of every religion have spent their lifetimes to prod humanity to rise on these scales of excellence. The core message of ancient Indian

scriptures including the Vedas, Upanishads, Bhagvad Geeta, Mahadev, etc., etc., can be summed up in a few words: Rise on the scale of internal excellence.

Actually, everyone is trying to rise, but in ignorance, we are either searching for the wrong thing or we are going about it the wrong way, and in the process, creating major problems for ourselves and for others. Everyone wants to be happy, but by happiness, we really mean something slightly different. This is because virtually every human emotion comes packaged as a pair of opposites. For example, if there is happiness, sadness and despair are also possibilities. So, when we say we want to be happy, we are really referring to a subtler form of happiness; *blissfulness*, the term, which by definition, is devoid of the opposite. So, unknowingly everyone is searching for blissfulness. In Sanskrit, blissfulness goes by the name, *Sat Chit Ananda*. A subjective measure of internal/emotional excellence is one's capacity to remain centered in the presence of extenuating circumstances that are part of life. This state is toward the top-end of the scales of excellence where an individual is able to transcend the three components (and be in the state of bliss) and yet remain engaged in mundane activities of life. Yogis refer to this state as *Turya Avastha*.

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