

PATIENT'S PERCEPTION TOWARDS ALLOPATHIC AND AYURVEDIC MEDICINES IN INDIA: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this article is to understand the prevalence and perception among Indian patients towards traditional Indian medicines as well as their notions regarding allopathic medicines on its feasible integration. Changing lifestyles and reduction in the affordability regarding sick care, in terms of money and time are some of the factors that are leading patients towards helping them to think about their wellbeing. Many patients also suggested that due to lack of curative treatment for several chronic illnesses excessive cost of allopathic medicines, microbial resistance, and its emerging diseases amongst them are some of the reasons for them to shift towards traditional or alternative medications in India. A cross-sectional study was undertaken during this research to analyse different perspectives related to ayurvedic and allopathic but will also discuss why all around the globe are still very much aware about Ayurveda. This study showed considerable support on behalf of both traditional and allopathic but also significant variation among its users. Still, Ayurvedic medicines is increasing its popularity all around the world, but patients are more concerned about their quality through inclusion of advanced technology to gain global acceptance over allopathic medicines.

KEY WORDS: Allopathic Medicines, Ayurvedic Medicines, advanced technology, Patient's Perception Changing lifestyles

INTRODUCTION

Ayurvedic or traditional medicines are considered as one of the world's oldest medical systems and it is still being practised in all parts of India (Karunamoorthi, et.al, 2012). These remedies include medicinal products extracted mostly from plant life, however also from animals, metals, and minerals. Ayurveda overall, is involved with the management of several lifestyle problems which can be established amongst particular age groups in our society owing to stress-related phenomena as well as different factors (Chaudhary & Singh, 2011). Complementary medications pursuits to strengthen each individual and therefore, they are a part of a holistic approach. Such medicines include all kinds of health aspects and thus,

contribute to physical, mental, spiritual as well as emotional well-being. The study is conducted on the perception of patients towards ayurvedic and allopathic medicines in India. Recent study acknowledged that most of the consumer demand ayurvedic products due to its tremendous potential to treat the whole person, by addressing their body, mind, and spirit. Broad objective of this research is to also determine patient's perspective on allopathic medicines or complementary form of medicines as they have also been practised in our country from many thousand years. But now it has become a common query among every patient that typically arises before starting any remedy whether to choose ayurvedic or allopathic kind of remedy for a selected sickness. And among patient's such kinds of question in their mind is justified as, it is their perception after all because it is about their life and of their nearest loved ones. Many patients also suggested that, while considering allopathic no individualisation is kept in mind as most of them preferred the same kind of medications if they suffered from same kind of disease (Nahar, et.al, 2017). This paper discusses the kind of medications strikes in a patient's mind in the first place whether, its ayurvedic or allopathic which provides faster relief as compared to both. On the other hand, ayurvedic medicines are also better than contemporary medicines because they cure diseases permanently and destroy the overall growth of a germ in a patient's body. Despite, such advantage to allopathic medicines they are also safe to consume with minimum side effects and less expensive. There are numerous factors which defines their perspectives. Ayurveda is gaining popularity amongst them at a constant rate as traditional method of medications treat and manage health of an individual using natural extracts while allopathic involves synthetic drugs while treating a disease. Natural extracts have a minimum rate of side effects and medicines extracted from chemicals may have side effects ranging from mild to severe (Huie, 2002). Modern method of medication uses certain type of pills, painkillers, and many more drugs to cure several kinds of chronic and life-threatening diseases as well. Though, if such medications are taken by a patient for a longer period of term can have severe side effects on their body. Conventional methods of medicine totally rely heavily on different chemical drugs to treat illnesses. But patients are only prescribed with those allopathic medicines which have been clinically tested. The major reason behind the acceptance of contemporary form of medicine is that if taken in an emergency by a patient can give quick results by slowing down its spread in a human body. Thus, traditional form of medicine though naturally extracted like herbs, oils takes a bit longer in proving their result towards sickness and such medications are generally not undertaken by patients in emergency situations (Chopra, et.al, 2010). Patient's perception with regard to allopathy and ayurveda are very limited and the different factors which will be discussed below have their own affects

separately, therefore at the end they produce a huge impact on patient's perspectives. From, the past few years we have observed that the situation is different but there is a need for smart strategies towards rejuvenation, revitalisation of ayurveda and its treatment facilities.

LITERATURE OF REVIEW

Ayurveda is considered as ancient Indian medical system which is being used from more than thousands of years. Ayurvedic medicines are a derived product which mainly combines and also include natural extracts from herbs, animal, mineral and also consist of metals. It is one of the world's oldest medical systems (Kumari & Kotecha, 2016). The major objective of ayurvedic treatment is to, first of all cleanses the body, and restore the balance of the body that will lead to promote good health. Practitioners of ayurveda believe that each human is basically made up of five elements found in our universe those elements are: air, water, fire, space and earth. Mentioned elements of the universe combine in a human body to form three kinds of life forces or energies those are called doshas. Therefore, if a person suffers from any kind of illnesses or health issues then they are linked to any form of imbalances on doshas. Each form of dosha controls a different body function. Vata dosha is a kind of dosha and those who practise ayurveda explains that this is the most powerful of all three doshas. It controls functions in our body like how cells divide, blood flow, heart functioning, mind, breathing as well as the capability to get rid of waste through our intestines. Pitta dosha can regulate our digestion, metabolism (how well we break down consumed foods), and control hormone which are linked to the appetite of human body. The third one is kapha dosha which helps to control body strength, building up of muscles, weight, and stability of our immune system. According to practitioner of ayurveda they believe a patient's health issues are directly linked to develop disruptions related to doshas. Many patients rely on such form of treatment but majority of them rely on allopathic because most of the ayurvedic practitioners used to treat diseases within a long period of time (Sen & Chakraborty, 2017). Patient's described that when they feel any kind of sickness or injury, their primary objective is mainly to first of all get rid of its pain and relieve themselves as well as achieve faster recovery. The most prevalent allopathic medicine taken by them in any type of illness is paracetamol but, many doctors suggested that it has many serious side effects on their when they consumed on a regular basis. It is highly recommended not to intake when we suffer from fever. Allopathic are a type of conventional or modern form of medicine and such medications are FDA-approved. The allopathic medicine manufacturers spend numerous years during its development and testing them through robust form of clinical trials to measure their effectiveness and safety when consumed by a human body.

Allopathic practitioners are highly qualified doctors who help to prescribe them with the most effective clinical treatments and medicines and try to heal or cure patient's illnesses via drugs, radiation, and surgery (Maizes, et.al, 2009). They have many advantages over ayurvedic as it uses advanced form of technology on their diagnosis procedures. Still, contemporary, and traditional medications are mostly preferred by all patients. Most of them also preferred to choose after consulting from their friends, relatives to decide their appropriate therapy. But ayurveda is a part of our Indian health system be it for treating cold and fever, chronic illnesses, heal pain from injuries there are several ayurvedic cure for all of them but we will hardly notice that allopathy practitioners would suggest a patient or prescribe with an ayurvedic medicine. Allopathic medicines are derived from proven methods of scientific tests, tools, and procedures. Whereas ayurvedic remedies are prepared from natural herbs, extracts and plants as they are very close to nature. Major Key advantage of ayurvedic medicines among patients is, they have minimal side effects, and it also doesn't cause any kind of devastating effects on their body. Allopathic medicines have very mild and severe side effects on a patient's body because they are prepared as well as synthesised in labs. Practitioners of allopathic have the title of MD or medical doctor as they have specialisation in several speciality areas of surgery, therapies and physicians (Crumley, 2006). Physicians also provide various preventative allopathic cares through various kinds of antibiotics, vaccinations, and screenings. Allopathic physicians also provide preventive measures and allopathic care to their patients though, many of them counsel their patients with special care and educate them to take preventive health care such as proper diet, regular exercises to keep them fit. Modern allopathic doctors are very highly qualified in their specialisation and skilled who have gained huge potential in their specialisation to treat illnesses and injuries of their patients with usage of latest technology (Vaibhav, et.al, 2009). People of urban areas in India are mostly inclined towards modern methods medications because the allopathic doctors and nurses are legally authorised and licensed by Indian medical association to perform and ensure their patients with best treatment. In the field of allopathic, everyday new form of medicines and treatment are being developed which eventually requires a huge amount of investment into research and development. There are various medical facilities in over the country and all of them can go anywhere across the country to seek medical help. Such highly skilled doctors and their utilisation of modern technologies in the medicinal and health sector have saved many patients lives improved the quality of modern medical system. Modern form of medicinal system is generally backed by advanced technology. Allopathic medicines are manufactured on a large scale and pharmaceutical companies invest a huge amount of money on preparing their right

compositions for a particular health issue (Torri, 2012). They are easily available and help a patient to get an instant relief from fever to joint pains. Despite, the initiatives taken by Government of India to improve ayurveda large population of India is still inclined towards modern based treatment in both of rural and urban India. Medicine has evolved rapidly from the last few decades and allopathy is now being practise throughout the world. Therefore, although allopathic medicines have so many advantages but sometimes patients also experience severe side effects after taking the prescribed medications (Niggemann & Grüber, 2003). The side effects of such medicines are mostly minor and they are also unlikely to occur in their bodies. Some side effects related to modern medicines are skin rashes, headache, insomnia, dizziness, constipation, abnormal heart rhythms and internal bleeding in a patient's body. Modern medications may have better systems than traditional medicines, thus if a patient's health issues are mild and they start evolving over the years ayurvedic medicines can be an effective means of treatment to treat such diseases. Ayurveda says that every mineral, natural herb, plants root and their leaf, every bark found from the nature have a medicinal value. Most of the patients carry a common myth in their mind about traditional medication is that they take a longer period of time than modern remedies to relieve pain or an ailment in a body, by making the allopathy as an ideal choice for curing diseases. Basically, many ayurveda practitioners highlighted the truth that it takes time to heal a disease in from ayurvedic medicines eventually relies on imbalances the person's body is carrying as well as for how long. The traditional method uses an extraordinary technique to recognise as well as understand origin of the health issue. Such medications are very much affordable as compared to allopathic medicine whether it is a major or minor disease. Ayurveda is most effective towards providing solutions whilst a hassle has started, as it additionally focuses on offering a patient with most appropriate healthcare in order to that no problem arises again (Faust, et.al, 2011). There are several benefits related to traditional methods of medications which make it better than any other alternative medicine like allopathic or homeopathic. An Ayurvedic doctor tries to focus on overall health of the patient and ensures to provide them with complete cure by balancing the doshas and gunas in the patient's body (Mukherjee, et.al, 2017). A traditional medication also tries to nourish our brain and activate the healing properties. Ayurvedic medicines consist of all natural elements and they are easily available in our nearby pharmacy stores. It also helps boost up the body's immune system that helps it to fight against all sorts of bacteria and viruses present in the human body. Contemporary medicine only works to kill specific form of bacteria or viruses as; it does not work on the overall health of an affected person. Such medicines do not have any reference towards the spiritual health despite the other one, traditional medicine

work on physical, emotional and spiritual fitness additionally. Ayurvedic treatments provide remedy to any signs and symptoms as well as also additionally make sure that the same does no longer repeat in the future. However, the dominance of contemporary and modern medicines among the patients has stalled the progression of traditional medicines when witnessed during the last several centuries from today. Therefore, it is the opportune time to implement certain strategies to facilitate integration of traditional medicine, contemporary and modern medicine with latest science and technology (Swan, 2012). All the above mentioned factors of both traditional and contemporary have their own affect separately, therefore it produces a huge impact on patient's perception and practise of ayurveda among health seekers must be developed among common public.

Objectives of the study:

To know the perception of patients towards allopathic and Ayurveda medicines in India.

Research Methodology:

This study is empirical in nature. In this study 233 respondents were contacted to give their perception towards allopathic and Ayurveda medicines in India. The data analysis was done with the help of the frequency distribution and pie charts were used to present the data.

Data Analysis and Interpretation:

Table 1 Due to high cost of Allopathic medicines patients are opting Ayurveda medicines

| Particulars | Agree | Disagree | Can't Say | Total |
|--------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------|
| Respondents | 171 | 19 | 43 | 233 |
| % age | 73.39 | 8.15 | 18.46 | 100 |

Table 1 presents that with the statement Due to high cost of Allopathic medicines patients are opting Ayurveda medicines, it is found that 73.39% of the respondents agree with this statement.

Table 2 Demand of Ayurveda medicines is rising because of its potential of healing person's body and mind

| Particulars | Agree | Disagree | Can't Say | Total |
|--------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------|
| Respondents | 179 | 17 | 37 | 233 |
| % age | 76.82 | 7.30 | 15.88 | 100 |

Table 2 presents that with the statement Demand of Ayurveda medicines is rising because of its potential of healing person's body and mind, it is found that 76.82% of the respondents agree with this statement.

Table 3 Modern Allopathic medicines have the potential of curing chronic and life threatening diseases

| Particulars | Agree | Disagree | Can't Say | Total |
|--------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------|
| Respondents | 181 | 19 | 33 | 233 |
| % age | 77.68 | 8.15 | 14.17 | 100 |

Table 3 presents that with the statement Modern Allopathic medicines have the potential of curing chronic and life-threatening diseases, it is found that 77.68% of the respondents agree with this statement.

Table 4 Perception of patients depends on condition of patient and type of disease

| Particulars | Agree | Disagree | Can't Say | Total |
|--------------------|--------------|-----------------|------------------|--------------|
| Respondents | 169 | 21 | 43 | 233 |
| % age | 72.53 | 9.01 | 18.46 | 100 |

Table 4 presents that with the statement Perception of patients depends on condition of patient and type of disease, it is found that 72.53% of the respondents agree with this statement.

CONCLUSION

Through the above-mentioned research work we have come to understand that primary motivation which let patient's shift towards traditional medicine is the fear of side effects of allopathic medicines provided to them by doctors or those that they use to perceive along with their own knowledge source. Majority of the respondents appeared very satisfied after using traditional methods of treatment. Most of the patient's also claimed that they haven't got the chance to avail ayurvedic medicines because they were only preferred with modern medicinal

system. Rural patients believed to consider only home remedies rather than visiting any of the health service providers because of their strong cultural influence, educational background and lack of health infrastructure and health facilities in their areas across India. They preferred to go for *jhar-phuk*, *dhami-jhakri* and many other options which are based on their culture. If their health issue turns mild and gets not solved then only they consider or think of second options. Within the end, we have also concluded that emergency condition like fractures, surgical instances or severe injuries and any other diseased conditions patients only believed modern health centres and allopathic medicines can only offer those better services because of the facilities provided to them and remedies provided with act rapidly with respect to ayurveda. Perception of patients in India regarding allopathic and ayurvedic medicines generally depended upon the kind of health issue and the patient's condition. Choice of medications at the end is mainly based on references provided to them through their relatives, neighbour, and other well-known person of their specific locality.

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