

Globalization & Mainstreaming - Integration of Ayurveda !

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ABSTRACT:

The global crisis in health care is deepening, one of the clearest lessons the pandemic has taught us is the consequence of neglecting our health system. Despite impressive scientific advances in modern medicine, contemporary society has witnessed increased global burden of infectious, non-infectious and chronic diseases, it has strong connection majorly with our adapted diet, lifestyle and behavior against our Prakriti. Ayurveda is a person-centered Medicine (PCM) and its unique approach towards health has a lot to offer to humanity. Integrative Ayurveda is focusing on integration while having Ayurveda Principles in the core center, without compromising its soul and application of cutting edge technology and biomedical sciences to create more evidence data and documentation for generating efficacy and safety data for the reemergence of mainstreaming and globalization of Ayurveda.

Keyword: Integrative Ayurveda, Evidence Based Ayurveda, Globalization, Rasashastra, Rasa Sindoor

INTRODUCTION:

As per NIH's (National Institute of Health) NCATS (National Centre for Advancing Translational Sciences) Director Dr. Chris Austin as conveyed at Wall Street Journal there are about 7,000 Diseases that affect Human Family and still counting. Out of which only few hundreds of these diseases have any approved treatment.¹

Despite advance in modern medicine, contemporary society has experienced series of epidemics and pandemics and increased global burden of non-communicable, chronic diseases and communicable infectious diseases. These public health crises are related, at least in major part due to incompatible food habits, behavior and lifestyle. There is increase interest and growing evidence and global level acceptance of integration of conventional medicine with traditional, complementary and alternative medicine (TCAM).

The World Health Organization (WHO) has been developing standards and documentation for the state and practice of TCAM.² This aim of this paper was to explore the scientific evidence for these approaches of Integrative Ayurveda model and applied aspect of basic research in Ayurveda, which hold promise for the future of healthcare and medicine.

Ayurveda: Holistic and Personalized healthcare system

Ayurveda literally means Science or Knowledge of life, the traditional medicinal system of India which originated over 5,000 years ago that focused on personalized health. The concept of Prakriti or individual nature or unique mind-body genomic phenotypic trait and Satmyata or compatibility have a central role in Ayurveda therapeutics. Ayurveda is a person-centered Medicine (PCM), which deals with healthy lifestyle, health promotion, and sustenance, disease prevention, diagnosis and treatment.³ There seem to be substantial similarities between the traditional systems like Ayurveda and the innovative approach of predictive, preventive and personalized medicine (PPPM).⁴ The Horizon 2020 initiative of the European Union rightly considers PPPM as the hardcore of its strategy.⁵

One size Fits all have never been the part of Ayurveda principles if you witness or read meticulously the diagnostic and treatment approach of Ayurveda. Another distinguishing feature which sets Ayurveda apart from other alternative systems of medicine is the fact that Ayurveda treats patient as a "whole" i.e. a combination of the body, the mind and the soul and provide customized and tailored made healthcare solution.

Integrated Ayurveda: Future of Global Healthcare

In the context of healthcare, the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) refers to medicine as

integrative (or integrated) medicine when it "combines treatments from conventional medicine and CAM for which there is some high-quality evidence of safety and effectiveness.⁶ According to Andrew T. Weil M.D., a well-known proponent of integrative medicine, "Integrative medicine is healing-oriented medicine that takes account of the whole person (body, mind, and spirit), including all aspects of lifestyle. It emphasizes the therapeutic relationship and makes use of all appropriate therapies, both conventional and alternative."⁷

This unique integrated approach of Integrated Ayurveda rather than Integrated medicine, looking Ayurveda through the windows of basic and applied science keeping Ayurveda fundamentals and concepts in the center core like a tree having lots of branch and ramification and the roots will ultimately be in the soil of Ayurveda itself. We're most likely to uncover the new bits of knowledge by working on this model without altering the fundamentals of Ayurveda and adding little bit to the pre-existing wisdom, transcending the peripheries, going beyond Acharya Charak, Sushrut, Vagbhatta which they have always encouraged and wished for if you read the meticulously the classical text of Ayurveda that promise to open up the new horizon for the optimum health span and longevity and living life.

Learning from Past for Integrated Ayurveda

"Let's get back to Basics; it's our ticket forward to the Future".

China has successfully integrated practices from both traditional and modern medicine through a bottom-up approach. Medical students in China take mandatory courses in both Western and traditional medicine, and actively implement their knowledge in hospitals and teaching clinics. As a result, Chinese physicians are familiar with the strengths and weaknesses of both medical systems and can choose the right combination to maximize the positive effects. However, the role of integrative medicine is still at infancy level in India. Another example of Extraction of an antimalarial drug from the herb used in Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) has been awarded the Nobel Prize for medicine in 2015. This brought traditional medicine, specifically TCM into the limelight.⁸ There is an unmet need for such resources and compendium from Ayurveda text awaiting to be discovered and executed to bring into the limelight from the Ayurveda perspective rather than reductionist approach to one molecule target

system to improve the delivery of healthcare system in India and abroad. However, during the process of integration there is a need for development and implementation of appropriate methodologies and standards of traditional practices. Above of all we need the documentation of prescription trend and safety measures approach toward various diseases modalities across different states of India at Government and Private University hospitals and Private clinics.

Too often contemporary research has been more oriented towards basic science methodologies. In the race to create scientific data for an evidence base, scientists need to be more careful when reporting results of efficacy, usefulness or advantages of traditional medicine. Translation of Ayurvedic concepts into modern terminologies is another area of great concern. For instance, Vata is not air, Pitta is not fire and Bhasma is not oxide - they have much deeper scientific meanings. Unless scientists understand these concepts correctly and comprehensively, any attempt at validation may be unscientific as well as counter-productive and detrimental. In the past, such ill-designed scientific attempts have rarely led to any meaningful advancement of knowledge. Rather, they have seriously damaged Ayurveda's reputation.⁹

Application of on-going Basic Research in Ayurveda

Efforts are being made to update the age-old scientific wisdom in various aspects by focusing on its pharmacologic and therapeutic potential. A large number of Indian scientists are directed toward herbal research that Journey is effectively started few decades ago in investigating Traditional medicinal plants and their potential in curing life-threatening diseases as per mentioned in Ayurveda and also emerging new potential and that is built in expansion of the knowledge of Ayurveda.

Non-drug therapeutic approaches such as Panchakarma, Upakrama and Ksarasutra etc. are like specialty or unique approach of Ayurveda can certainly be integrated into other health system broadening the choice available to physicians and patients.¹⁰ This is like what happens when you integrate two ideas from two different fields or horizon it emerges into potential question of Basic research to be executed. The consequences of this are unexpected and serendipity that basically leads into break-through, cutting edge discovery of all time

New challenges for Ayurveda: How it will stand?

Modern medicine has been extraordinarily developed with the Integration of technology in the field of diagnostic, prognostic, and curative procedures. Newer technologies are introduced each day for finer and precise understanding of human being and diseases. Few examples are Molecular genetics, Cellular Biology, Neuro-endocrinology, Biotechnology, Nanotechnology, Radio-diagnostics, and invasive cardiology are current trends used to explore the perimeter of possibility to probe deeper understanding of physiology and investigate pathology.

However, Ayurveda introduces itself as a 5000-year-old science of life. Many Vaidya's or Ayurveda doctors are proud to be a part of this traditional science. There is no or little change in the form of Ayurveda as it is being practiced. Contemporary Modern world is demanding for research-based evidence of Ayurveda concepts, procedures, therapy, formulations and products that is lacking in our system.

Even for Rasaaushadhis (herbometallic mineral) like Bhasma, KupipakwaRasayana there is great deal of controversy going on about the use of Mercury. But the use of Mercury in the Rashashastra; significant branch of Ayurveda is being practiced from ancient times. Since Ayurveda and many other researchers have also shown that it is organic Mercury which is highly toxic and Mercury used in Rasaaushadhis like in Rasa-Sindoor or Makardhwaj is inorganic form i.e Mercury sulphide (HgS). Many research papers have been published in this safety regards.¹¹

So now we need new paradigm towards Ayurveda. One example is by approaching it through the windows of Molecular biology, Cellular biology, and chemistry to investigate the concepts, procedures, products, formulation which have received little attention so far. And even what sort of mechanism is played by medicinal plant that are very precisely described in Ayurveda; at the level of genes or molecular level and how it is changing metabolism and curing diseases. How can we explain those physiology & mechanism to the modern world in terms of Modern science without losing the essence crux of Ayurveda Principles? This is the incredible question waiting to be tackled.

The Revolutionary notion needs to be a contemporary with the current scientific trends for making the world better place and free of diseases.

You might have question in your mind that why there is need of any innovative notion in keeping Ayurveda progressive in present time? Otherwise, Ayurveda will not remain Ayurveda; soon the curtains of modern herbalist research will cover it up!!

Future Perspective and Discussion

Although this article has reviewed a portion of the available literature on Integrated Ayurveda care for mainstreaming and globalization and personal opinions over it, there may be other viewpoints and models that exist and should be considered as we approach global future of health care. As well, this discussion does not necessarily imply that one model is superior to another or one system is superior to another but with the advancement, one can draw back to the traditional science and how we can make it beneficial for the whole world.

In conclusion, such an 'integrative' exercise is extremely complex and challenging - rather like 'riding a tiger'. There is a risk of losing identity and getting lost or carried away, as also equally, there is a danger of getting swamped. We do hope that, in this voyage of mainstreaming and globalizing Ayurveda, rather than a tiger-ride it will become an elephant-ride to raise the vision, widen the horizons and enhance our knowledge to the ultimate benefit of humanity.¹²

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