



Socio-demographic factors and pattern of diseases among the patients attending Unani and Ayurvedic medical college hospital, Dhaka

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Abstract

The pattern of diseases varies from one country to another and even from region to region of the same country. This cross sectional study was conducted in Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital to find out the socio-demographic factors and pattern of diseases among the patients attending Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital, Dhaka. Data was analyzed by SPSS version 16.0. The mean age and income of the respondents was (43.17±16.71) years and Tk. (10610.17±5013.83). About 90.4% of them were Muslim, 87.8% married, 54.4% lived in combined family, 27.83% passed primary school certificate, 26.96% suffered from gout, 13.4% suffered from sexual diseases and 11.3% respondents suffered from skin diseases. About 99.1% of them came after taking medicine, 70.2% respondents took medicine from allopathic practitioners, 46.96% of them were suffering from diseases for 1-6 months, 20% were suffering from diseases for more than six months. About 64.3% of them don't know the causes of diseases, 60.9% of the respondents came in Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital by them, 37.4% respondents came by knowing from their relatives. About 60% came in Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital before and 58.8% of them came in Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital about for one year. About 63.5% of the respondents were satisfied about the treatment of Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital and 34.8% of them told the treatment of Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital were good. Study found 89.6% gastritis, 74.8% constipation, 58.3% skin diseases, 36.5% gynecological diseases, 41.7% gout, 32.2% diseases in liver, 26.1% sexual problems, 20% urinary tract infection, 18.3% respiratory tract infection and 14.8% asthma patients. More awareness is necessary about Unani and Ayurvedic medicine from government, media and all publisher level.

Keywords: ayurvedic medicine, unani medicine, unani and ayurvedic medical college hospital

Introduction

In a World Health Organization (WHO) document, the traditional medicine is described in the following way: “the sum total of the knowledge, skills, and practices based on the theories, beliefs and experiences indigenous to different cultures, whether explicable or not, used in the maintenance of health as well as in the prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of physical and mental illness” [1]. With this description, it becomes apparent that the traditional medicine has wide spectrum. On one hand, it encompasses highly developed and sophisticated traditional medical systems such as the Ayurveda, the traditional Chinese, the Japanese, Tibetan medicine, Unani and others; on the other extreme it may just plainly cover a mother's household knowledge of curing children's ailments such as cold and cough. In between, several other traditional systems such as folk medicine, ethnomedicine, community medicine and others fall. In some countries mostly in the western countries, several other names such as complementary, alternative, or non-conventional are also used instead of traditional medicine. People have classified the traditional medicine in different ways. Perhaps classifying the traditional medicine into scholarly medical system, Folk medicine and Shamanistic medicine seems to be the most reasonable [2].

India has a very long, safe and continuous usage of many herbal drugs in the officially recognized alternative systems of

health viz. Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Homeopathy and Naturopathy. These systems have rightfully existed side-by-side with Allopathy and are not in ‘the domain of obscurity’ [3]. Millions of Indians use herbal drugs regularly as spices, home remedies, health foods as well as over-the-counter (OTC) as self-medication or also as drugs prescribed in the non-allopathic systems [4]. The more than 500,000 non-allopathic practitioners are trained in the medical colleges (>400) of their respective systems of health and are registered with the official councils which monitor professionalism. Hence, these systems are not folklore or traditional herbal practices. There are basic axioms of these systems leading to a logical and systematic structure of pathogenesis and diagnosis, which also serve as a determinant of therapy [5].

India is the largest country in the world where more amount of Ayurvedic system is used traditionally. The tendency of population towards Ayurveda is straight forward that is Ayurveda medicine doesn't have any harmful effect on animal or human body. So by seeing this approach towards Ayurveda it is necessary to incorporate new system towards safety which is known as Pharmacovigilance (PV). There will be the need of improvement of awareness towards safety use of Ayurvedic formulations. PV is a demanding science offering great opportunities for reducing harm to patients and costs to healthcare systems. From small beginnings, with the right knowledge and skills, PV can make an important contribution

to the health of the nation. Adverse drug interactions (ADR) reporting is an important aspect of post marketing surveillance^[6]. Ayurveda is a medical system primarily practiced in India that has been known for nearly 5000 years. It includes diet and herbal remedies, while emphasizing the body, mind and spirit in disease prevention and treatment^[7].

The herbal plants are used as medicines in folk and traditional medical practice based on the use of plants and plant extracts. The World Health Organization (WHO) has recently defined traditional medicine (including herbal drugs) as comprising therapeutic practices that have been in existence, often for hundreds of years, before the development and spread of modern medicine and are still in use today^[8].

Herbal drug constitutes only those traditional medicines which primarily use medicinal plant preparations for therapy^[8]. Herbal medicines may be made from the whole plants or a part of the plant, including the bark, stem, root, or seed and can be purchased fresh, dried, in pills, capsules, and in tinctures that are preserved in alcohol, glycerin, or another liquid. Herbal medicines are also in great demand in the developed world for primary health care because of their efficacy, safety and lesser side effects^[9]. India is a vast repository of medicinal plants that are used in traditional medical treatments. Certain herbs have become popular over the last some years, but herbal medicines are still poorly understood the public, medical practitioners and the media^[10].

The various indigenous systems such as Siddha, Ayurveda, Unani and Allopathy use several plant species to treat different ailments^[11]. Because of the toxicity and side effects of allopathic medicines, the use of herbal medicine becoming popular. This led to sudden increase in the number of herbal drug manufactures^[12]. The present study was conducted to find out the awareness about the herbal drugs in rural areas as the number of herbal drug manufacturers has been increased. The study also assess certain misconceptions, myths into the minds of general public regarding role of Herbal drugs in the treatment of diseases thereby promoting the use of these drugs^[13].

Ayurveda, the traditional Indian medical system is an important role play in the understanding and management of disease in the modern world. Modern medicine is extremely efficient in treating serious pathological conditions when there is an organ failure, acute infections, accidents and generally acute conditions that need potent medications, hospital care or high technological support however the leading causes of mortality in our times are conditions related to wrong lifestyle, lack of exercise, wrong nutrition, and stress. Diabetes, lung disease, liver cirrhosis, conditions are caused apart from hereditary factors from wrong choices in our daily lives. Modern medicine treats mostly external factors or intervenes in the biochemical chain of events e.g. emirates bacteria, gives substitutes for liormones, and supplements when there is any nutritional deficiency. We very rarely know all the causative factors of a disease. Ayurveda analyzes apart from the disease, which has it; to do this classifies people in different constitutions^[14].

These different constitutions have distinct characteristics and susceptibilities which are vital for the type of treatment a patient will receive. Ayurveda can help re balancing energies, using changes in nutrition and behavior, and prescribing

medicaments in a holistic way appropriate for different constitutions. Whatever we try to analyze in our modern scientific world through genetics has always been the cornerstone of Ayurveda. There is great emphasis in the mind and the psychological state of the individual in the prevention and treatment of a disease. In Ayurveda health of the individual, the society and the environment are connected in an intricate way. In our times where responsibility of the individual has been replaced by a superficial omnipotence of pills and technology, Ayurveda offers a new direction combining both a scientific and a philosophical approach that encompasses the individual the society and the environment^[15].

In recent years, lifestyle oriented health problems are increasing, especially in the youngsters due to increased ambitions regarding career and their thirst to achieve high very early in life. To overcome these physiological and psychological problems, people are searching for avenues other than allopathic practices. Among them, Ayurveda services are one of the major practice which many people because it claims of very less or no side effects^[14].

In developed and developing countries, the role of traditional and complementary medicine is gaining importance which has been recognized by the WHO. However, very few studies are done so far to understand the scenario. It is important for developing nations because traditional medicines are cost effective and can be easily administered. In some countries, these traditional methods, along with modern methods, have been practiced. In India, along with Allopathy, Ayurveda, Homeopathy, and Unani health care practices are practiced. The Ayurvedic system of medicine is having a presence in all strata of Indian society due to its ease of availability, affordability and safety. Ayurveda system of medicine is having the support of both central and state governments through various agencies. This is also helpful to overcome shortage of allopathic doctors in the country^[16].

Ayurveda can be defined as a system, which uses the inherent principles of nature, to help maintain health in a person by keeping the individual's body, mind and spirit in perfect equilibrium with nature. It is one of the oldest medical practices in the Indian subcontinent. Knowledge of Ayurveda was passed from Guru/Teacher to disciple, later on; the knowledge was confined in the form of books. It is comprehensively documented in 'Charaka Samhita' and 'Sushruta Samhita'. Ayurveda practice has a holistic approach towards disease, unlike modern medicine. It deals with mental, spiritual, and physiological body complex along with social aspects of the human being. The Philosophy of Ayurveda is based on five great elements theory called Panchmahabhutas. These five elements are represented in the form of Tridosha i.e. Vatha, Pitta and Kapha. The mental and spiritual attributes are described as Satva, Rajas, and Tamas. Ayurveda considers the human being as combinations of three doshas, five elements, seven body tissues, five senses with sensory and motor functions, mind, intellect and soul^[17].

Herbs are staging a comeback and herbal 'renaissance' is happening all over the world. The herbal products today symbolize safety in contrast to the synthetics that are regarded as unsafe to human and environment. Although herbs had been priced for their medicinal, flavouring and aromatic

qualities for centuries, the synthetic products of the modern age surpassed their importance, for a while. However, the blind dependence on synthetics is over and people are returning to the naturals with hope of safety and security. Over three-quarters of the world population relies mainly on plants and plant extracts for health care. It is estimated that world market for plant derived drugs may account for about Rs. 2, 00,000 crores. Presently, Indian contribution is less than Rs. 2000 crores. Indian export of raw drugs has steadily grown at 26% to Rs.165 crores in 1994-95 from Rs.130 crores in 1991-92. The annual production of medicinal and aromatic plant's raw material is worth about Rs.200 crores. This is likely to touch US \$1150 by the year 2000 and US \$5 trillion by 2050 [18].

Methodology

A descriptive cross sectional study was done. Study place were Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital, Mirpur-13, Dhaka. Study period were from January 2016 to August 2016. Study population was the entire person who came for treatment in Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital, Mirpur-13, Dhaka. Inclusion criteria were the entire person who came for treatment in Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital, Mirpur-13, Dhaka. Sample size 345 people were interviewed. A semi structured questionnaire was used as data collection tool. Data collection was done by face to face interview with the all respondents. One male interviewer, one female interviewers and researcher himself were involved in data collection. The interviewers were trained up before the beginning of data collection. Data was analyzed by using the software SPSS 16.0 version. And data are presented in tables, graphs, charts and bars.

Results

A total number of 345 respondents were interviewed. The study identified the socio-demographic factors of the respondents. The mean age of the respondents was (43.17±16.71) years. The mean income of the respondents were Tk. (10610.17±5013.83) and mean family members of the respondents were (9.92±1.987) persons (table -1).

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their age, monthly income and family member (n=345)

Variables		Number	Percentage
Age	7-20 years	33	9.6
	20-34 years	66	19.1
	35-49 years	102	29.6
	50-74 years	135	39.1
	75-100 years	9	2.6
Mean age= (43.17±16.71 years)			
Monthly Income	4,500-10,000 Tk.	99	55.9
	10,000-20,000 Tk.	72	40.7
	20,000-25,000Tk.	6	3.4
Mean income=(10610.17±5013.83 Tk.)			
Family member	1-3 persons	99	30
	3-6 persons	180	54.4
	6-8 persons	51	15.5
Mean family members=(9.92±1.987 persons)			

Among the respondents 90.4% were Muslim in contest of that 9.2% were Hindu. 87.8% respondents were married while

12.2% were unmarried. Most of the respondents (54.4%) are in combined family in contest 30.8% are lived in single family. Socio-demographic factors of the respondents are shown in the table -2.

Table 2: Distribution of the respondents according to their age, monthly income, family member, religion, marital status and family type (n=345)

Variables		Number	Percentage
Religion	Islam	312	90.4
	Hindu	33	9.6
Marital status	Married	303	87.8
	Unmarried	42	12.2
Family type	Single	171	49.6
	Combined	174	54.4

Regarding educational status, majority 27.83% of them are passed in primary school certificate and 26.96% of them are illiterate. 26.96% of the respondents completed their secondary school certificates in contest of that 1.74% respondent were Master's degree holders and 3.48% were bachelor. 13.04% respondents had complete higher secondary school certificate (Figure 1).

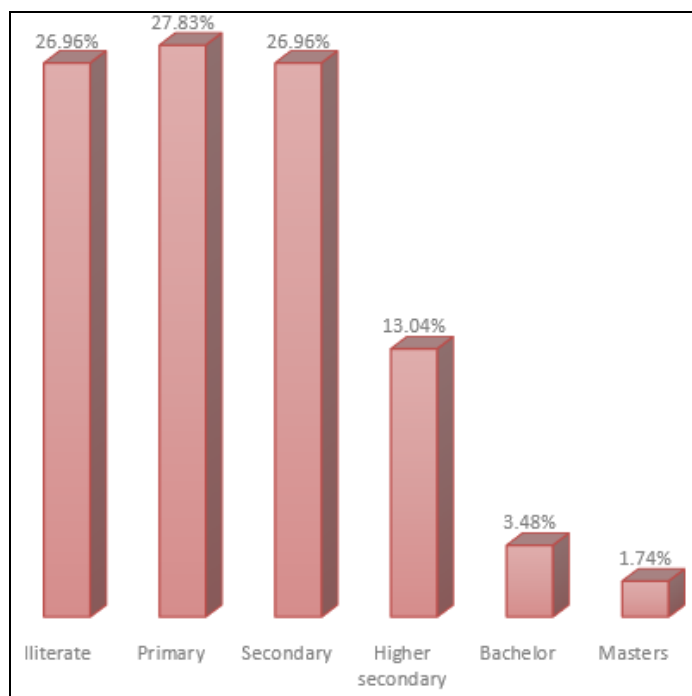


Fig 1: Distribution of the respondents according to their education level

The study finds the diseases of the respondents. Most of the respondents (26.96%) were suffering from gout in contest of that only 0.9% were suffering from dysentery, sleepless, constipation, piles and fever. 13.4% respondents were suffering from sexual diseases in contest 1.7% were suffering from indigestion, general weakness and paralysis and 2.6% were in diabetes patients. 11.3% respondents came for skin diseases while 3.5% came for blood pressure and 4.3% came for asthma. 8.7% respondents came for gastritis while 6.09% came for gynecological problems. The study investigated that 6.96% respondents came for jaundice and pain (Figure 2).

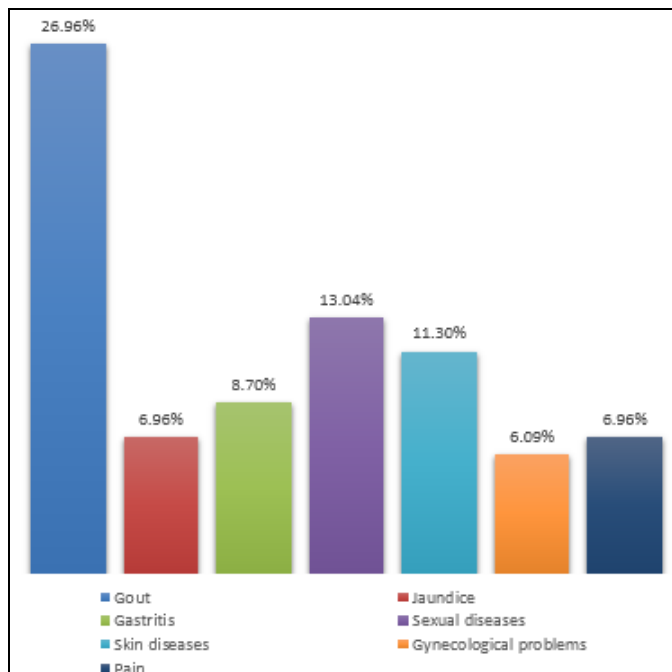


Fig 2: Distribution of the respondents according to their diseases pattern

Most of the respondents (99.1%) came in Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital, Dhaka before taking medicine while 0.9% respondents came without taking medicine before. 70.2% respondents took medicine before from allopathic practitioners while 28.1% took medicine before from homeopathic practitioners. Among the respondents 46.96% of them were suffering from diseases for 1-6 months while only 2.61% of them were suffering from diseases for 1-7 days. 23.48% were suffering from diseases for (16 days – one month’s) in contest of that 1.74% was suffering from diseases about 8-15 days. Among the respondents 20% were suffering from diseases for more than six months (Figure 3).

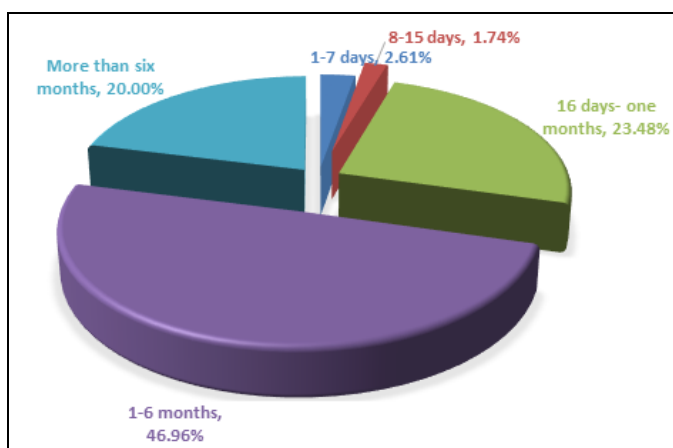


Fig 3: Distribution of the respondents according to their suffering period in diseases

Majority of the respondents (64.3%) don’t know the causes of diseases in contest of that 31.3% of them are brought diseases

by congenital. 60.9% of the respondents came in Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital by their self-activities in contest 1.7% came influencing by media. 37.4% the respondents came by knowing from their relatives. Most of the respondents (60%) came here before while 40% of them came here in the first time. 58.8% of them came here about for one year in contest 1.2% of them came here about ten years. Among the respondents 40% of them came in Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital for five years. 63.5% of the respondents are satisfied about the treatment of here in contest of that 1.7% is not satisfied about the treatment of Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital. 34.8% of them told the treatment of Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital were good (Table 3).

Table 3: Distribution of the respondents according to level of satisfaction (n=345)

Variables	Number	Percentage
Satisfaction		
Satisfied	219	63.5
Good	120	34.8
Not satisfied	6	1.7

Among the respondents, 89.6% had gastritis in the contest of that 3.5% had spleen diseases. 74.8% had constipation while only 4.3% had ear diseases. More than fifty percentages of the respondents (58.3%) are suffering from skin diseases while only 5.2% of the respondents are suffering from cardio-vascular diseases.

More than one third of the respondents (36.5%) were suffering from gynecological diseases while only 6.1% of them were suffering from central nervous system diseases.

Table 4: Distribution of the respondents according to their diseases (n=345)

Variables	Number	Percentage
Diseases		
Gastritis	309	89.6
Liver diseases	111	32.2
Spleen diseases	12	3.5
Cardio-vascular diseases	18	5.2
Respiratory tract infection	63	18.3
Central nervous system diseases	21	6.1
Urinary tract infection	69	20
Sexual diseases	90	26.1
Gynecological diseases	126	36.5

About 41.7% of the respondents told that they had gout in contest only 7.8% of the respondents told that they have diabetes.

Near about one third of the respondents told that they had the diseases in liver while only 8.7% of them told that they had chronic fever. 26.1% respondents had sexual problems while only 13.9% of the respondents had eye diseases.

20% of the respondents had urinary tract infection while only 10.4% of the respondents had jaundice. 18.3% of the respondents had respiratory tract infection in contest 14.8% of them had asthma (Table 5).

Table 5: Distribution of the respondents according to their diseases (n=345)

Variables	Number	Percentage
Diseases		
Skin diseases	201	58.3
Gout	144	41.7
Chronic fever	30	8.7
Ear diseases	15	4.3
Eye diseases	48	13.9
Diabetes	27	7.8
Asthma	51	14.8
Constipation	258	74.8
Jaundice	36	10.4

Discussion

41.1% people were satisfied up to 50-75% with efficacy of Herbal drugs. A large portion of population up to 50% prefers allopathy, 28% prefer ayurvedic and 20% prefer homeopathic system of medicines. In case of medical emergencies 79% people prefer allopathy, 20% prefer ayurvedic and only 1% people prefer homeopathy. In case of common ailments 35% people prefer allopathy, 48% prefer ayurvedic and 17% prefer homeopathic medicines^[18].

This cross-sectional study was done from January, 2016 to August, 2016. A total number of respondents were 345. The mean age and income of the respondents were (43.17±16.71) years and Tk. (10610.17±5013.83). 90.4% of them were Muslim and 87.8% respondents were married. 54.4% are lived in combined family. Majority 27.83% of them are passed in primary school certificate. Most of the respondents (26.96%) were suffering from gout and 13.4% respondents were suffering from sexual diseases. 11.3% respondents suffering from skin diseases. 99.1% of them came after taking medicine they came in Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital, Dhaka. 70.2% respondents took medicine before from allopathic practitioners and 46.96% of them were suffering from diseases for 1-6 months. 23.48% were suffering from diseases for (16 days – one month's) and 20% were suffering from diseases for more than six months. 64.3% of them don't know the causes of diseases and 60.9% of the respondents came in Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital by their self-activities. 37.4% the respondents came by knowing from their relatives. 60% came here before and 58.8% of them came here about for one year. 63.5% of the respondents are satisfied about the treatment of Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital and 34.8% of them told the treatment of Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital were good. 89.6% had gastritis, 74.8% had constipation, 58.3% are suffering from skin diseases, 36.5% were suffering from gynecological diseases, 41.7% had gout, 32.2% had the diseases in liver, 26.1% respondents had sexual problems, 20% of the respondents had urinary tract infection, 18.3% of the respondents had respiratory tract infection and 14.8% of them had asthma.

The study finds most of the respondents are low income groups and low educated who taking treatment from Unani & Ayurvedic medical college hospital.

The amount of stress and the change in life style leads to various health problems and a proper healthcare system should be identified from the alternative healthcare solutions

and implemented appropriately.

For more awareness, the appropriate steps are required to be taken to spread the awareness about importance of the herbal drugs in the society. This can be made possible by various ways like involvement of Ayurvedic practitioners, govt. awareness programmes, medical camps by pharmaceutical companies, conduction of seminars in educational institutions to create awareness among the young generation. Such studies are also required to be carried out in each corner of country to find out the depth of awareness and measures to be taken. The most common sources of information, on herbal drugs, are TV, Newspaper, Books and Family friends. The single most common reason for preferring herbal drugs is- firm belief that these do not have any side effects. These drugs are usually procured from Pan Sari shops, Kitchen, Kitchen garden and sometimes the municipal gardens/parks. Pharmacist can play a pivotal role in increasing their use by educating the people regarding benefits of these drugs. Government policies should not only promote their use but should also have strict control on standards and quality of these drugs. These can be made duty free to make easily affordable by masses. Such a situation will pave the way to reap the benefits. Ayurvedic services in the society are very limited. Appropriate education and creating a scientific approach towards the practice of Ayurveda would definitely lead to the effective utilization of the services of Ayurveda available to the people at large. Although the people perceive Ayurveda as a medical science in this particular sector of respondents, a very deep study could change the concept of Ayurveda among all the social groups and levels where in the people would even have the chance of perceiving Ayurveda as other options like consumer goods, health products and body massage. It is understood that the people who are seeking the health care services are in need of the good health and comfort and are not much particular about the system of medicine that would help them in obtaining the complete healthcare solutions. Along with the evaluation on the awareness on Ayurvedic system of Medicine, the study benefit in understanding how this particular system of medicine - Ayurveda is perceived among the respondents and for what health problems they prefer to seek the advice of the Ayurvedic physicians. Hence educating the younger generation people towards the availability and benefits would create more awareness and effective utilization of the alternative healthcare systems. Correcting and bringing in all the chances of the availability of alternative healthcare solutions would lead the society towards the better tomorrow and greater future.

Conclusions

The most common sources of information on herbal drugs are TV, Newspaper, Books and Family friends. The single most common reason for preferring herbal drugs is- firm belief that these have fewer side effects. These drugs are usually procured from Pan sari shops, Kitchen, Kitchen garden and sometimes the municipal gardens/parks. Pharmacist can play a pivotal role in increasing their use by educating the people regarding benefits of these drugs. Government policies should not only promote their use but should also have strict control on standards and quality of these drugs. These can be made duty free to make easily affordable by masses.

The appropriate steps are required to be taken to spread the awareness about importance of the traditional system in the society. This can be made possible by integration of modern medicine with traditional systems of medicine. Traditional systems must undergo evidence based approach as carried out in modern medicine. Traditional medicines must be extensively exposed to clinical research to establish efficacy and safety without any bias. The awareness study has extended to know other limitations and constraints that have inhibited the growth of Ayurvedic system of medicine and also the effective utilization of the alternative health care solutions with its constraints. The study has done to reveal the present existing scenario in the society of a particular sector and has proved its result through the study.

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