



Review Article

Globalization of Ayurveda – A New Perspective

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ABSTRACT:

Ayurveda naturally addresses most of the global health needs: it is based on primary care, prevention, root cause treatment and eco-friendliness. Many aspects such as preventive, curative, mitigative, recuperative and rehabilitative approach of Ayurveda is more all encompassing and broader than that of the most modern branches of healthcare today, hence the door has been opened for Ayurveda globally.

Now Ayurveda being recognized and known as a global trend setter, for having the highest standards. But Internationally, it has so far mainly been developed in the fields of wellness, tourism and beauty.

Unfortunately, Globalized Ayurveda is today exploited to a degree that it is unrecognizable from commercialized modern medicine. Instead of promoting genuine Ayurveda, is show-cased to attract gullible medico-quacks resulting in commercial spread without ever developing Ayurveda's full potential as a medical system for the sake of global health.

Also it has become fashionable to connect this ancient holistic knowledge system of Ayurveda with other fields. Perhaps, today the pharma community is obsessed with globalization of Ayurveda, but in reality promoting only their short-term self interest of the herbal industry. While it is true that Ayurveda cannot remain unaffected by the sweeping changes taking place in every other field, it is necessary to critically examine the direction of these changes and assess its impact on the system.

However, before developing a strategy for the global level- needs to focus on mainstreaming the use of Ayurveda at the local level. There are many issues related to the official recognition of Ayurveda mainly like documentation particularly the clinical trials, Quality, Safety and Efficacy of drugs, Standard Operating Procedures- Manufacturing and Therapeutics. There can be many approaches that can be undertaken to an advantage of process such as technical cooperation to add value through innovation for public health or collaboration of Ayurveda with other medical systems to find solutions for global health challenges.

Finally, the time has come for Ayurveda community to come out with its own self regulations which will allow Ayurveda to make its unique contribution to sustainable global health.

KEY WORDS: Globalization, Ayurveda,

INTRODUCTION:

Ayurveda is considered as 'Science of life'. It deals elaborately with measures of healthful living during the entire span of life and its various phases. This probably makes it the earliest medical science having a positive concept of health to be achieved through a blending of physical, mental, social, moral and spiritual welfare. Besides dealing with principles for

maintenance of health, it has also developed a wide range of therapeutic measures to combat illness. Thus Ayurveda became one of the oldest systems of medicine dealing with both the preventive and curative aspects of life in a most comprehensive way. Now Ayurveda, said to be a world medicine, the most holistic and comprehensive medical system.

An overview of Ayurveda

- Health- is a bio-physical and physiological state of equilibrium and a contended state of consciousness, senses and mind.
- It accepts the human being as an inseparable entity of body, mind and spirit.
- It is mainly focused on overall well being and proper life style for longevity of the healthy life.
- It considerate Microcosm and Macrocosm made of the same constituent elements and ruled by the same functional principles to maintain homeostasis and to restore imbalances in a natural way.
- It understands the pathological processes underlying metabolic, chronic degenerative and immune related diseases and disposes of tools for early diagnoses and treatment.
- Main asset is “Drug for patient” approach, as opposed to “Drug for disease” approach of modern medicine.
- Its purpose is to facilitate individuals to attain Purushartha; as a prerequisite for achieving the supreme ends of life consisting of righteousness, wealth, artistic values and spiritual freedom.
- It promotes psychological and spiritual wellness in individuals; to reinforce the ethical and moral dimensions of life.
- It usually deals with quantum of the Ayu, the life.

World Ayurveda – Its current status as a Potential

- It is increasingly practiced around the world due to its holistic approach and good success rate in handling psychosomatic cases and for the promotion of positive health.
- Ayurveda medicine therapies/drugs have diversity, flexibility, accessibility and affordability.
- Today Ayurveda is gaining growing attention and acceptance all over the world.
- Today the promotion of Ayurveda education in different countries of the world contributed significantly towards making Ayurveda global in real sense.
- As the world continues to go green, the demand for Ayurvedic products is set for an increase in demand as products based on herbal components.
- There is a growing demand for natural products including items of medicinal value,

pharmaceuticals, food supplements and cosmetics.

- Big potential to establish industrial and technological base around traditional formulations.
- Where modern medicine has nothing substantial to offer, world come over for availing the benefits of Ayurveda.

Globalization of Ayurveda offers opportunities on one side & challenges on the other.

Challenges / Problems on Globalization of Ayurveda

- Lack of standardization, adequate modernization, quality assurance and product knowledge.
- Lack of identity, brand equity and marketing mechanism.
- Lack of evidence based documentations and of stringent qualification norms.
- Lack of quality assistance and quality control initiatives.
- Lack of standardization in the field of production and practice.
- Non-availability of standardization facilities,
 - research and development facilities,
 - institutional support facilities
- Unavailability of herbs and raw materials,
 - delays in approval of formulations,
 - ban on several herbs for exports,
 - lesser availability of certain herbs.
- Lack of trained personnel - not enough qualified therapists and doctors.
- Challenges like growing inequality across and within nations.
- Regional differences in the practices.
- Traditional medicine might not be available at all healthcare levels.
- Health insurance might not cover treatment with such Traditional medicines.
- Official education in Traditional medicine might not be available at University level.
- Principles of Ayurveda are Universal but the practices are localized and individualized.
- Challenged to benefit the maximum people with minimum expense.
- Increased demand for the medicinal plants and the products.

- Primitive manufacturing process resulting in unacceptable levels of quality especially in documented form.
- Main barrier in acquiring formal Ayurveda education was the lack of authentic texts and capable teachers who can convey the subject in depth.
- Lack of awareness – specifically about the details.
- Difficulty in explaining the system.
- Bad perception of herbo-mineral system of medicine.

Opportunities

- To focus now on greater dissemination of ancient wisdom with a scientific research perspective at a global platform.
 - This is a very vital step toward globalization of Ayurveda.
- To translate the published articles in local languages for the benefit of practitioners of Ayurveda.
- The Department of AYUSH with strong thrust on promotion of AYUSH has already initiated progressive steps.
- Development of AYUSH clusters, Scheme for upgrading to Centers of Excellence, Scheme for Extra Mural Research projects.
 - This will encourage the propagation of AYUSH systems all over the world in long term.
- National Mission on Medicinal plants.
- Appropriate technologies for processes like pre processing, extraction, drying, compacting, granulation, particle size reduction, fermentation, and other related pharmaceutical processes.
 - An important stage in broadcasting Ayurveda at a global level.
- Traditional Knowledge Digital Library (TKDL) Globalization of Ayurveda will help it to be known to everyone.
- Patents being the most vital aspect of the global pharma industry, more efforts will be taken to acquire and protect Ayurvedic medicines.
- Standardization problems can be solved to some extent by implementing Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP)
- Many countries insisting upon Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) procedures to be followed by the drug manufacturers.
- Reforms of Ayurveda in education and research.

- Has always been encouraging the promotion of Ayurveda.

- New job opportunities.
- Global entrepreneurship with innovative outlook.
- Globalization boosted industrial production and promoted exports.
- Process and product validation- To prove efficacy of products.
- Participation in international expos.

Recognized and considerable increase in the export potential of the Ayurvedic medicines.

This shows the increasing interest and awareness about Ayurveda among the global community.

Effects of Globalization of Ayurveda:

Globalization has various aspects which bring positive and negative effects for the world in different ways.

a. Positive effects

- Spreads multiculturalism and provided better individual access to cultural diversity.
- Protection of indigenous traditional medicine knowledge; solve problems in ensuring its proper use.
- Facilitates the revolution in information and communication technology.
- Increase in information flows between geographically remote locations is a technological change observed in the process of globalization.
- Facilitates increased circulation of communications, satellites, and increased availability of internet.

b. Threats / Negative Effects

- Depletion of medicinal plant resources results in regrettable lack of rapport between national markets from different cultures.
- Leads to Disorganized sector – both in the clinical practice and medicine manufacture.
- Low tendency in the new generation entrepreneurs.
- Shortage of human resources alongside lack of skilled workers & infrastructure.
- May raise disputes in their different cultures of the nationals.
- May suffer from low productivity and poor product quality.
- Faces ruthless competition from the large domestic and multinational companies.

- Down fall of standard formulae & standard criteria in the genuinity of the raw drugs.
- May cause non-availability of certain raw drugs and alter continuous supply.
- Driven by published evidence, little or no evidence exists in regard to the treatments offered by Ayurveda.
- Unavoidable modernization in its holistic approach.
- Limited focus on new product development centres.
- Patent examiners could not search relevant traditional knowledge due to repeated documentation.
- Leads to a more inequitable distribution of income among countries and within countries.
- Added adulteration methods in threatened plant species and herbal resources.
- Prohibit easy availability of information and good quality work space.
- Degrade good testing facilities and infrastructure facilities.
- Protection of indigenous traditional medicine knowledge; and problems in ensuring its proper use.
- Need to main stream Ayurveda for meeting the new coming challenges to the human health.
- To re-write the misconceptions about Ayurveda in the Western minds.
- Ayurveda has to absorb diagnostic features of conventional medicine and use them to treat patients.
- Minimize use of jargon and use simple language for better communication.
- Have to get help of WHO (World Health Organization)
- Government should also allocate more funds for research and development in Ayurveda.
- Some serious attempts should be made for scientifically validating the efficacy of Ayurvedic treatments.
- Creating necessary infrastructure and conditions that would lead towards innovation and entrepreneurship in this field.
- Need to protect traditional, inventive and creative activity against misappropriation of third party patents.

Some Important Reform Measures

In order to find a place for Ayurveda in today's globalized world, the Ayurveda community needs to take several correctives.

- A vertical combination of network starting from cultivation and collection of medicinal plants and raw drugs, drug development and business needs to be created.
- Research on holistic, evidence-based treatments and approaches rather than on proving the efficacy of drugs.
- Recognition for genuine Ayurveda and its wise Acharyas and skilled Vaidyas.
- Ayurveda education, by its students, promoters and practitioners, has to be further stream-lined.
- The syllabi for modern medicine need to include inputs from Ayurveda.
- Efforts for promotion and propagation of medicinal plants need to be up-scaled.
- Linkage with other traditional systems like Siddha, Unani and Yoga needs to be explored.
- Ayurveda medicines do not have to be sold as food supplements or cosmetics anymore but are recognised as therapeutic products.
- Requires the presence of expert or well-trained and experienced Ayurveda physicians.
- The cultivation of medicinal plants, which is the most important ingredient in Ayurvedic medicines has to be regularized and controlled.

CONCLUSION :

The traces of phenomenon of 'Globalization' has originated from Vedas and Upanishads many decades ago by which means the people of the world unified into a single society and function together. The concept of 'Vasudhaiva kutumbakam' was described such that whole world is like a home. So in this context sages are saying that the entire world is truly just one family.

On other hand Globalization is the process of international integration arising from the interchange of world's views, products, ideas and other aspects of culture. It means erasure of national boundaries for technological, socio-cultural, political and economical purposes. This knowledge in the form of nectar will be rejoiced by the Ayurvedic community and all. Ayurveda is a life science of holistic approach and a very renowned medical science. So that its main aim can be fulfilled i.e. Sarvabhutanukampaya means Ayurveda for all living being.

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