



KNOWLEDGE ATTITUDE PRACTICE SURVEY RELATED TO IMPORTANCE OF TRADITIONAL MEDICINE IN LUCKNOW

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ABSTRACT

Background: Traditional medicine refers to health practices, approaches, knowledge and beliefs incorporating plant, animal and mineral based medicines, spiritual therapies, manual techniques and exercises, applied singularly or in combination to treat, diagnose and prevent illnesses or maintain well-being. All systems of medicine in

India can be classified into two streams: A. Classical stream b. Folk stream **Aims and**

Objective: The aim of this study was to evaluate the knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) of the people of Lucknow regarding traditional medicine. **Materials and Method:** A

KAP questionnaire was designed. 80 households were randomly selected and teams of two students each administered the questionnaire to an adult in the household. **Conclusion:**

Traditional medicine is respected and widely used in the rural areas. Allopathic services are also used but may not be convenient to access and is also expensive. Traditional medicine should be encouraged, especially in rural areas as it contributes substantially to primary health care.

KEYWORDS: Traditional Medicine, Knowledge, Attitude, Practice.

INTRODUCTION

Traditional medicine refers to health practices, approaches, knowledge and beliefs incorporating plant, animal and mineral based medicines, spiritual therapies, manual techniques and exercises, applied singularly or in combination to treat, diagnose and prevent illnesses or maintain well-being.

All systems of medicine in India can be classified into two streams

a. Classical stream: This comprises of the codified and organized medicinal wisdom with sophisticated theoretical foundations and philosophical explanations. Systems like Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, Amchi and Tibetan, etc. are examples.

b. Folk stream: Comprising mostly the oral traditions practiced by the rural villages. The carriers of these traditions are millions of housewives, thousands of traditional birth attendants, bone setters, village practitioners skilled in accupressure, eye treatments, treatment of snake bites and the traditional village physicians/herbal healers and the tribal physicians. This stream of inherited traditions are together known as Local Health Traditions (LHT). LHT represent an autonomous community supported health system which efficiently and effectively manage the primary health care of the Indian rural mass. LHT is still alive and runs parallel to the state supported modern health care system; but its full potential is still not fully utilized and also that the great service it is rendering to the rural people go largely unnoticed because of the dominant western medicine.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVE

The aim of this study was to evaluate the knowledge, attitudes and practices (KAP) of the people of Lucknow regarding traditional medicine.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

A KAP questionnaire was designed. 80 households were randomly selected and teams of two students each administered the questionnaire to an adult in the household.

RESULTS

Most of the respondents felt that traditional medicine is good and economical. Most of the respondents also used allopathic medicine services, especially for major illnesses for all members of the family. The expenditure on allopathic medicine was considerable higher than for traditional medicine.

In the 80 questionnaires filled out, they were critically analysed. The following results were obtained.

A. Demographic profile of respondents

Sex of respondents: F 50 M 30

Age of respondents: Range 13-80 years

Mean 36 years

SD 16 years

Education: No education 40
Class 1-3 23
Class 4-7 17

Occupation: Farmer 30
Labourer 10
Broom making 15
Other 25

B. Responses to questions

1. Do you use traditional remedies at home?

Yes	35
No	45
Total	80

2. Can you give 2-3 examples?

Yes	10
No	23

3. Is there a traditional healer(s) in the area?

Yes	15
No	45
Dont Know	20
Total	80

4. Can you give the names of one or two?

12 gave names

5. Can you name some medicinal plants?

Yes	20
No	10
Dont Know	25
Total	55

6. Traditional medicines are better than allopathic medicines?

Yes	20
No	40
Dont Know	20
Total	80

7. Traditional medicines are cheaper than allopathic medicines?

Yes	45
No	5
Dont Know	30
Total	80

8. Members of the family for which traditional medicine was taken.

Children 26

Adults/elders 13

Pregnant 4

9. What formulations of traditional medicine were taken?

Powder 5

Liquid 27

Ointment 14

10. How many times in the last year has a family member consulted a traditional healer?

1-4 times 13

More than 5 2

Many 8

Dont Know 7

DISCUSSION

A majority of the respondents are familiar with traditional medicine, could name a local traditional healer and had some knowledge of their type of practice and their use of medicinal plants. Many households had consulted and used the services of traditional healers, occasionally or frequently during the previous one year, mainly for minor illnesses, especially for children.

Most of the respondents felt that traditional medicine is good and economical. Most of the respondents also used allopathic medicine services, especially for major illnesses for all members of the family. The expenditure on allopathic medicine was considerable higher than for traditional medicine.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Traditional medicine is respected and widely used in the rural areas. Allopathic services are also used but may not be convenient to access and is also expensive. Traditional medicine should be encouraged, especially in rural areas as it contributes substantially to primary health care. The government should consider integrating traditional medicine into the formal health system of the state.

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