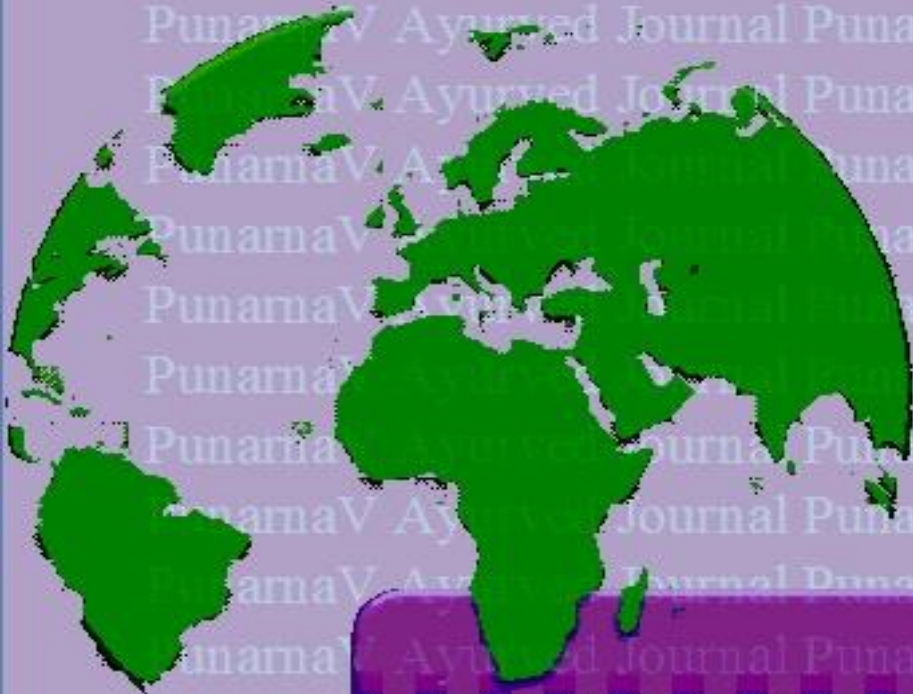


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**TITLE: MAINSTREAMING OF AYURVEDA GLOBALLY: AN ENTREATY FOR
ACTION**

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**MAINSTREAMING OF AYURVEDA GLOBALLY: AN ENTREATY FOR ACTION**SUJNANA V.S.¹, ALOKNATH D.D.¹, ASHA H.S.¹, SHREEVATHSA²¹P.G. scholars, ²HOD and Professor (I/C),

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ABSTRACT:

Ayurveda deals with all facets of life. The origin of Ayurveda was before the evolution of whole mankind and its sole purpose was health and welfare of all communities. In spite of various medical sciences emerging at regular intervals, as per universal rule of "survival of fittest" one who is the best gets adored, Ayurveda persisted from last around 4000 years without changing in its single doctrine. Ayurveda has preserved its prestige in all regards. Though, it is recognized as Indian system of medicine, its knowledge and practice is expanded globally. Moreover, today in the 21st century, a person anticipates preserving his health and enjoying his life happily and it is the science of Ayurveda that includes all that is essential to make a man not only healthy but also happy. There are few hurdles to be crossed to make this science accepted globally. This article is an effort to throw some light on such hurdles and few solutions to cross the hurdles.

Key words: Ayurveda, Globalization, Mainstreaming.

INTRODUCTION**Correspondent:**

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Mainstreaming is the process of making something the principal, dominant¹, or widely accepted group, style or idea. Mainstreaming of *Ayurveda* is the process of updating *Ayurveda* to the present era without interrupting the basic principles to make it acceptable to the world and to utilize them in Health care delivery with

fuller responsibility and accountability. Indians proudly remind the world around that *Ayurveda* is being successfully used for more than past 4000 years. Of course it is an undisputed fact that this is the most ancient science of health known to the humanity, but the credibility of the science cannot be determined only by eliciting its history, but does by its development through the years. By the word development, it should imply the increase in its knowledge bank, prompt updating and its aptitude to reach the utmost number of ailing humanity. India is of course the motherland of *Ayurveda*. But the sages who propounded the knowledge did not intend to limit the benefits of this science of healing to any geographic region or any particular religion of people. *Ayurveda* is universal. In the present era mainstreaming *Ayurveda* have lots of issues and challenges to be tackled.

ISSUES AND CHALLENGES IN MAINSTREAMING OF AYURVEDA

There are number of issues and challenges which hinder mainstreaming of *Ayurveda*, knowledge regarding present status of *Ayurveda* will give a clear-cut idea of issues and challenges to mainstream *Ayurveda*.

Current status of education in *Ayurveda*

Today, *Ayurveda* is more practiced like a business rather than an ancient medical science.

Education also took a path of commercial interest hence quality of education demolished in such a way that *Ayurveda* graduates lost their hopes in *Ayurveda* and facing towards contemporary medical sciences, lack of role models is also a reason to lose their confidence to practice *Ayurveda*. Students of *Ayurveda* are puzzled by the different streams of present education in *Ayurveda*, where one stream makes students to follow 'classical *Ayurveda*' as it is without any time tested modifications, other stream completely follow 'modified *Ayurveda*' without adhering to the basic principles of *Ayurveda* and there is one more intermediate stream which is following modified *Ayurveda* without hampering the basic principles of *Ayurveda*. *Sanskrit* language is one more hurdle for the students who had not taken it as a subject in their pre-university education.

CURRENT STATUS OF RESEARCH IN AYURVEDA

Modern-day *Ayurveda* is extremely commercialized and conventional *Ayurveda* is slowly waning. More than a few distinguished centers are performing research in *Ayurveda*; the principal activity of majority of the centers is to compare the efficacy of some Ayurvedic formulations with contemporary drugs in diseases with contemporary medical diagnosis. For clinical trials contemporary research methodologies are applied with

expensive sophisticated tools, but the basic doctrines of Ayurvedic treatment are generally ignored. A huge number of researchers are targeted in the direction of herbal research including the development of new active principles beneficial in several disorders. Nevertheless the foremost potential of *Ayurveda*, the fundamental principles, are ignored and that is why majority of the herbal researches are concluded with little in hand. Such so-called scientific research in *Ayurveda* of more than a few decades has helped neither to *Ayurveda* nor contemporary medicine to any considerable extent apart from in creating awareness.

Current status of manufacture of medicines in *Ayurveda*

The new era herbalist lobby evolving in India in recent days throws light to a very suicidal tendency among a group of Ayurvedic people to give up the identity and self-respect of this age old tradition to the greedy market benefits. These scientists occupied in the domain of herbal medicines seem to have lost trust in mainstream *Ayurveda*. They are not in favor of engaging in the progression of globalization in the name of *Ayurveda*, but aspire to gain all the advantages offered by the system. They conveniently use the terms like “herbals” and “natural products” but the term *Ayurveda* is not acceptable to them. Along with these even the classical

Ayurvedic medicines are tainted by adding suffix or prefix to the original name. At present the herbal label given to *Ayurveda* is spoiling the reputation of the system and reducing its scope beyond what we can imagine with far reaching consequence. The example for such a disaster is the report published by the Journal of American Medical Association (JAMA) regarding the heavy metal contents in *Ayurveda* medicines that they call as HMPs, i.e. Herbal Medicine products². They are fair in their stance as modern scientists when they concern how HMPs can have metallic contents. The answer to the question lies in the difference between HMP and *Ayurveda* medicine. This article generated a lot of disturbance among the *Ayurveda* community India and overseas. This has really bang *Ayurveda* as a cyclone, practically wiping off the landmarks achieved worldwide for the acceptance and recognition of *Ayurveda*.

Current status of *Ayurveda* in global scenario

Ayurveda has penetrated the global health field to begin with as a massage system around twenty years back. With the propagation of Health tourism in India in the recent years, the attractiveness of *Ayurveda* expanded in the west. Many foreign students started coming to India to learn *Ayurveda* and this promoted the spread of short-term *Ayurveda* courses in India. Several people who have completed

these courses went back and started practicing as *Ayurveda* practitioners. Since in many of the countries there was no definition for who a qualified *Ayurveda* doctor is, anything done in the name of *Ayurveda* became popularized in the west. The early efforts to globalize *Ayurveda* commenced with institutions providing *Ayurveda* education extending several courses varying from one month to three years. Then, many positive health care centers and spas started offering a variety of *Ayurveda* therapies varying from massages to “Pañcakarma” therapies! Many well qualified and semi qualified *Ayurveda* professionals migrated to the west from India and started their own institutions setting up their own standards.

The current issue is not the “globalization” of *Ayurveda*. *Ayurveda* at present globalized in a very huge manner. The point is to keep back the face of *Ayurveda* from the branded visions and get it accepted globally as a scientific system of medicine in its own aptitude. *Ayurveda* has been misinterpreted by various custodians of the system in the west under several labels to suit their suitability to get established themselves in accordance with the situations in the country of practice. Thus *Ayurveda* became “herbal medicine”, “natural medicine”, CAM (Complementary and alternative medicine)³, Holistic medicine⁴, etc.

Except Indian sub-continent nowhere in

the globe, *Ayurveda* is able to retain its identity as a mainstream health care practice. This has to change. The aim should be to propagate globally the enormous potentials of this system to heal, in as many countries as possible, in its own aptitude as a scientific medical system of India. If at all fail to do the same at the earliest, irretrievable damage can be done to its credibility globally by many a negative forces which are trying to damage the reputation of *Ayurveda* and questioning its age old tradition of healing powers and scientific base as a system of medicine.

CURRENT STATUS OF AYURVEDA IN VIEWPOINT OF POLICY MAKERS

While *Ayurveda* fraternity takes profuse pride over the culture and heritage of the Vedic wisdom, it is regrettable that India doesn't have any well-defined policy on mainstreaming *Ayurveda* globally; neither is there any recognized field guide to accomplish the target. All through the past virtually sixty years of independence the rulers of the country continued to ignore this Indian science of healing.

The issues and challenges for mainstreaming *Ayurveda* globally cannot be efficiently confronted without considering the basic foundations of the science. At this juncture, Ayurvedic society required to have an urgent self-

hindsight concerning the Indian scenario and is vital for the world wide acceptance of *Ayurveda* as a valid system of medicine with an independent status.

SOLUTIONS FOR

MAINSTREAMING OF AYURVEDA

Although the doctrines of *Ayurveda* are called eternal⁵ (that never perish and are always valid), it is need to up-to-date with the current scientific trends for the advantage of the society and for nurturing *Ayurveda*. It is the responsibility of the fraternity to save *Ayurveda* from any kind of unethical and illegitimate practices and should not permit any negative forces to advance within *Ayurveda* community that damage the reputation and name of this age-old tradition of healing.

The issue has to be tackled systematically. There is a need to scientifically establish the efficacy of the system with ample of experimental and scientific data. The scientific approach should be based on unambiguousness, credibility and reliability. The whole *Ayurveda* scientific society should connect each other and do repeated R&D (Research and Development) studies for the classical and proprietary products and there should be open access of information and mutual alliances. Data should be collected from every possible source and should be presented scientifically and with credibility.

The ordinary standard of graduate level Ayurvedic education in India is undeniably a cause of concern. The syllabus of BAMS course of studies is required to be reassessed and revised. Curriculum should be such that scholars are able to present themselves on global platform. Minimum standards according to new gazette will dilute the quality education since by mere reduction for staff will not do any beneficial for science and fore comers while helping the private sector to bloom economically in name of donations and less payment to needy. Demanding government for Sanskrit as a default in school will not only be convenient for *Ayurveda* but also to other fraternity like arts & preserves language helping to retrieve the culture of nation that was before. Transferring of syllabus to curriculum is duty of experts and this should be based on teaching, learning and evaluation methodologies. Knowledge of Sanskrit should be made essential as it is a core part of *saṃhitā* study, students should be encouraged for practice of *saṃhitā* *paṭhaṇa* with *ṭhīkā* (commentary) under expert guru's (Teacher) rather than studying translated books for under-graduation as well as post-graduation. Teaching faculty should be trained in teaching methodologies as well as teaching technologies (Audio-Video aids, projector and screen etc.) By comparing contemporary science parting *Ayurveda* as

non-clinical and clinical branches becomes setback because whatever has explained in *Ayurveda* has been viewed through clinical aspect, For example- *Caraka* and *Suśruta saṃhitā* has been accepted as authenticated clinical medicine text but the scholars of *saṃhitā sidhanta* (Basic principles) has very slightest chance to go for clinics. While the modern toxicology deals with preventive standpoint on contrast *Agada tantra* (Toxicology) has clinical, prophylactic and remedial toxicology. Still such branches have been kept under the heading of non-clinical branch. This discrimination should be terminated because without a clinical application any of the branches are of no use.

Updating *Ayurveda* by integrating with contemporary technologies, without fluctuation in the basic doctrines, is a tough task that needs great intuition in the field of *Ayurveda* and intellect nurtured with contemporary tonic. Any research in *Ayurveda* can use contemporary technologies but strictly adhere to the doctrines of *Ayurveda*. Fundamental research in *Ayurveda* should be boosted and proper publication of such research to make it beneficial for the *Ayurveda* fraternity for the further studies. *Ayurveda* researchers should not irrationally follow the research methods meant for contemporary medical science; instead design such a research methods which fits

to Ayurvedic concepts.

One of the major issues in globalization is regarding the quality of *Ayurveda* medicines exported. *Ayurveda* pharmacology has to be developed as a separate entity from Herbal researches and separate courses have to be started. A governing body should be formed for *Ayurveda* pharmacy related affairs and GMP (Good manufacturing practice) should be strictly implemented.

There must be:

- Comprehensive review of all international issues pertaining to *Ayurveda* and clear line of action based on the review.
- Study of current GMP⁶ norms for *Ayurveda* medicines and where necessary reorganization, restructure and ensure strict implementation.
- Comprehensive study of the methods to achieve quality control and norms for Ayurvedic medicines and then permit stage wise execution of these norms in all *Ayurveda* medicine manufacture units across the country.
- Meticulous study of the composition of all classical *Ayurveda* medicines based on contemporary parameters and consequently establishing the standards – the acceptable limit of heavy metals etc. in each of these medicines.
- Establishing well-furnished government

funded R&D labs in every state where there are manufacturers of *Ayurveda* medicines and making it mandatory for every medicine that goes into the market to be certified by these laboratories.

- Crafting well-defined standards and protocol for recognition of any new medicine which is labeled as “*Ayurveda* ” and also reconsidering all existing OTC (Over-The-Counter) medicines which are marketed in the name of “*Ayurveda* ”.
- Composing the labeling of *Ayurveda* medicines more comprehensive with clear description of ingredients, mode of usage etc.

In European Union (EU), all products of *Ayurveda* are traded as dietary supplements, not as a separate entity in the mode of *Ayurveda* products, while in USA there is a monitoring body called FDA, which pronounces the standards for market authorization of any manufactured goods. So under those standards, any *Ayurveda* product fulfilling the criteria can be introduced in the US market. Indeed, Ayurvedic products in EU are put equal to dietary supplements/herbal products due to which these products need to be processed for market approval in the same manner. But in fact Ayurvedic products are virtually diverse from so called herbal products. *Ayurveda* products are produced in accordance with the philosophy/doctrines of the *Ayurveda*

system. Hence *Ayurveda* products must be formerly kept distinct from the herbal products and the western regulatory authorities need to be persuaded on this aspect.

Without further delay, The Government of India has to develop a well-defined policy on mainstreaming *Ayurveda* globally. It should concentrate at the areas stated above and there should be directing at nothing less than a due identification for *Ayurveda* as India’s own scientific system of medicine. Measures should be taken for enhanced quality of the medicines that are marketed as *Ayurveda* products. The essential amendments are to be made to the Drugs and Cosmetic Act 1940⁷ so as to define various categories of *Ayurveda* medicines and the labeling norms should also be well defined. It should be emphasized that the necessary consumer information is provided in the labels holding the composition, indication, dosage and the need of medical supervision by a qualified *Ayurveda* physician as and when applicable.

It is high time Indian law makers should realize their mistakes and resort to a rapid action strategy, as achieved by the Chinese, for the upgrade of our own traditional knowledge stock. WHO is directing and synchronizing with health authorities in corresponding countries across the globe and is accountable for providing leadership on global health

issues, sculpting the health research agenda, fixing rules and standards, formulating evidence-based policy options, affording technical assistance to countries and supervising and assessing health developments, and these concerns of WHO hold good for TRM⁸ (Traditional and complementary medicine) too. WHO is

providing enough room to develop *Ayurveda* with flexible research methods which are acceptable and corresponds to traditional medical system and *Ayurveda* fraternity should make use of such opportunity to mainstream *Ayurveda*.

CONCLUSION

Current status of *Ayurveda* is not satisfactory, and the way in which it is modernized is also not acceptable for the future of *Ayurveda* as well as humanity. It is also not acceptable to keep practicing it in old form. *Ayurveda* should flow through time to make it updated to the present world. Ayurvedic principles are eternal and applicable in any point of time hence while updating *Ayurveda* it should

be kept in mind that these principles should not be hampered and should be followed in each and every step. Reforms are needed in education system, research methods, manufacturing of medicines, globalization and also attitude of policy makers. These are the factors which will be the key for mainstreaming of *Ayurveda* globally.

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