

Chapter 27

The Role of AYUSH in Mental Well-Being

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ABSTRACT

Mental wellbeing was the centerpiece of the Indian system of medicine. Many healthcare issues are resolved by the peace of mind and brain stimulating processes. Of late, Government of India adopted many systems of medicines that are complementary to the modern allopathic medicines and named it AYUSH system of medicine. In this Ayurveda, Yoga, Homoeopathy, Siddha, Unani, Swa-rigppa, and additional healing systems are represented. There is also a great need for psychological wellbeing due to the rapid increase in stressful life situations. The current modern medical care is not adequate to provide mental health services in the society. At the same time, many indigenous and AYUSH system have come into action and solve the problem the best way it possible. The chapter focuses on the role of AYUSH system in catering to mental wellbeing in India. The policies of the government of India are to promote mental health and wellbeing in society. The specialties of various systems of medicine in curing the mental health conditions have been elaborated.

BACKGROUND

The AYUSH services are used by Indian population very widely over a period of time. The Care and cure is assured in many aspects of healthy life in the population which otherwise deprived from the modern biomedical system of medicine. The modern biomedical system of care is very costly and difficulty to reach by masses in India. The faith of people is always with the AYUSH system of medicine due to its services in millennia of Indian culture and society. The AYUSH services are always targeted in a holistic manner and there is less barriers to access by the people for the services. The Indian system of medicine

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look at various mental health ailments with harmony in the system which causes less side effects and cure for many diseases. The body and mind are taken as a whole while prescribing medicines in most of the cases. So, there would be cure at mental level.

The World Health Organization defined traditional medicine as the combination of the knowledge, skills, and practices based particularly on the theories, beliefs, and experiences which are indigenous to different cultures irrespective of explicable or not, and helping in management of health, prevention, diagnosis, improvement or treatment of both physical and mental illness (World Health Organization, 2000). The use of traditional medicine in various mental ailments is widely practiced in the world for the benefit of the patients. In India different system of traditional medicines were in use since ancient times with proven results for cure and prevention of mental health ailments. The traditional medicine services were usually accessible to the members of the society widely across time. So, these are the first line of treatment for the community even in unorganized community for mental health services. Moreover, the social and cultural cohesion among members of the society help in dealing with many issues of mental health in the community itself instead of modern day hospital facility which help in recovery of many mental health conditions.

The therapeutic cure of each system of medicine is also well documented by the practitioners of the respective particular system. Many of the practitioners receive training in informal way without going to formal training in the designated institutes in ancient time. The knowledge also transmitted from one generation to other very first in the informal way of training and capacity building by proper handholding. Many of the knowledge are tacit in nature and can be learn by close observation and treatment by the healers. Latter on with the help of codified ancient knowledge many things transmitted easily through generations. These treatment procedures are also many a time evidence based and the method to capture evidence is quite different from the modern laid down guidelines.

Latter on with the trust of the people and requirement of alternative system or complementary system governments start adopting these methods in the system of common public services. It has been found that there is also need of curative system for all mental health ailments. Whereas, the modern system has limited medication for limited mental health ailments. Which necessitates the requirement of alternative system of medicines to provide full coverage for wide rang mental health conditions. At this juncture, the alternative systems comes into picture with their age old curative actions which thy otherwise practiced in the process of cure along with winning the trust of the community.

A large number of people take alternative medicines exclusively or along with the modern biomedicine for many acceptable reasons like faith and cultural acceptability, low cost, and firm belief on the systems of medicine. Moreover, India have starkly very low number of specialists available in the field of psychiatric which provide systematic modern biomedicines for cure of mental health cases (Thirthalli, J., Zhou, L., Kumar, K., Gao, J., Vaid, H., Liu, H., ... & Nichter, M. (2016).

Methodology

This study reviewed various types of reports like existing policies of AYUSH, various guidelines of AYUSH services implementation, and reports of AYUSH systems of medicine in different states and central government. The literature reviewed policy and programme documents, and un-published grey literatures in the form of notes and reports at relevant sections. This is a secondary analysis to elaborate the existing policies and implementation of AYUSH services, and its' loopholes in implementation in mental health services. The opinion and experience of AYUSH care providers are also taken into con-

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