

Current Prospects of Herbal Medicines in the World

Arpita Pithava^{1*} and Axay Pithava²

¹Department of Pharmacy, Vidyabharti trust College of Pharmacy, Gujarat, India

²Department of Biotechnology, Bangalore University, Karnataka, India

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*For Correspondence

Arpita Pithava, Department of Pharmacy, Vidyabharti trust College of Pharmacy, Gujarat, India, Tel: 7093380006.

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E-mail:
arpita.npanchal@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

[Herbal medicines](#) include the natural plants and their parts which are being used as medicinal purpose. Herbal Medicine is one of the oldest types of medicine in human history. It is very popular and widely practiced all over the world. Herbal medicine practice also known as Herbalism. Herbalism is one of the forms of [Alternative Medicine](#). A meticulous numbers of researchers are doing research on herbal medicines and numerous old books available about herbal medicine and their medicinal use. The countries like Egypt, China and India have the rich evident history of Herbal Medicine. The popularity of these medicines is increasing globally. The WHO (World Health Organization) estimated that approximately 75% to 80% of the population of some African and Asian countries using herbal Medicine for primary medication.

INTRODUCTION

Herbal medicines are the [natural plants](#) and their parts which are being used as medicinal purpose. This is one of the oldest types of medicine in human history ^[1-9]. Herbal medicine is still widely practiced all over the world. This practice also known as Herbalism. Herbalism is one of the forms of Alternative Medicine. A number of old books available about the plants and their medicinal use called Herbals. The countries like Egypt, China and India have the rich evident history of Herbal Medicine. The WHO (World Health Organization) estimated that approximately 75% to 80% of the population of some African and Asian countries using herbal Medicine for primary medication ^[10-16].

Now a day people can avail wide range of literature on Herbal medicine through [Open Access platform](#) and increase awareness about the Herbal medicine in societies ^[17-26]. There are plenty of Open Access Journals available on Herbal medicine, Natural products, [Traditional medicine](#), Natural Plants, Medicinal Plants, Naturopathy, Alternative and Integrative medicine, etc. Open Access Journals publishes literature and articles from leading scientists from all over the world ^[27-31]. They provide free access for articles on the up to date and current researches.

Major Herbal Medicine Societies in the World

The 16th and 17th centuries were the golden era of Herbal Medicine. The more and more plants incorporated during 18th and 19th centuries in Americas ^[32-39]. In the 19th century, analysis of chemical came in practice. Researches and scientists began to extract and analyze active ingredients from plants. After that scientists started making synthesizing plant compounds by their own ^[40-47]. Associations and societies formed to work towards the common goal of promoting and advancing excellence in Herbal Medicine. [Alternative and Traditional Medicine Research and Technology](#) and [Nepal Herbs and Herbal Products Association \(NEHHPA\)](#) are one of them. The NEHHPA is a world-wide organization of the herbal producers, manufacturers and traders. It was established in Nepal in 2002, to enlarge the viable enterprise system and has been running for the advancements of herbs and herbal sector. OMICS group publishes a journal titled Medicinal and Aromatic Plants which is associated with Nepal Herbs and Herbal Products Association ^[48-52].

Herbal Medicine: Area of Interest

There are copious numbers of eminent experts in the field of Herbalism all over the World. [Dr. Thomas Efferth](#) is the Chair of the Department of Pharmaceutical Biology in University of Mainz, Germany. He is Editor in Chief for the prestigious [journal of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants](#) ^[53-59]. His major area of interest and research is

on natural products derived from medicinal plants. His latest publication on [Ayurveda](#) for Cancer Treatment published in journal of Medicinal and Aromatic Plants ^[60-68]. [Dr. Yoshinori Asakawa](#) is Director at Tokushima Bunri University, Japan. He has published 660 original papers and 38 books of the field. His major area of interest is Isolation and structure elucidation of medicinal and aromatic plants. Gail Hughes from University of Western Cape, South Africa has recently taken a presentation on Medical pluralism in resource constrained communities: Utilizing indigenous knowledge and traditional (herbal) medicine practice for non-communicable diseases in [International Conference on Restorative & Alternative Medicine](#) held on October 24-25, 2016 in Chicago, USA ^[69-74]. Zhanqiu Yang, et al. from Wuhan University, China has taken presentation on Jiawei-Yupingfeng-Tang, a Chinese herbal formula, inhibits respiratory virus infection *in vitro* and *in vivo* at [2nd International Conference on Flu](#) held on October 31 to November 02, 2016 at San Francisco, USA. Hajara Muhammed Ladan from Ahmadu Bello University, Nigeria presented work on phytochemical screening and antimicrobial activity of some marketed herbal preparations against clinical isolate of *Salmonella typhi* at [International Conference and Summit on Industrial and Pharmaceutical Microbiology](#) held on October 17-18, 2016 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Anbu Jeba Sunilson J, et al. from KPJ Healthcare University College, Malaysia has worked on Hepatoprotective activity of isolated flavonoid from the roots of *Hibiscus vitifolius* and presented that valuable work in [2nd Global Summit on Herbs & Natural Remedies](#) held on October 17-19, 2016 at Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia ^[75-86]. Muhammad Irfanullah Siddiqui from Umm Al-Qura University, Saudi Arabia has worked on Comparison of allopathic and herbal medicine for the treatment of *Entamoeba histolytica*; a double blind clinical trial and presented in [4th Global Acupuncture & Therapists Annual Meeting and International Conference on Holistic Medicine and Holistic Nursing](#) held on July 14-16, 2016 at Philadelphia, USA ^[87-97]. PC Leung, Erik CH Ko and Gang Chen from The Chinese University of Hong Kong carried out study on the anti-inflammatory effects of an herbal formula. They have presented their study in [3rd World Congress on Pharmacology](#) which was held on August 08-10, 2016 at Birmingham, UK ^[98-105].

Researches on Herbal Medicine

There are meticulous researches are going on worldwide. Study on Therapeutic Effectiveness of an [Herbal Medicinal Product of *Hibiscus sabdariffa*](#) in Hypertensive Patients: A 16 Week Controlled and Randomized Clinical Study carried out by Herrera-Arellano A ^[106]. Dejene Tadasse Banjaw B has carryout a trial on Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis* L.) variety verification at Wondogenet, South Ethiopia ^[107].

[Maryam Farooqui](#), editorial board member of open access journal Alternative and Integrative Medicine has studied the Complementary and Alternative Medicines (CAM) and its Role in Thalassemia Treatment ^[108]. [Daming Zhu](#), Editor in Chief of the prestigious journal [Natural Products Chemistry & Research](#) published by [Omics International](#). She has recently published an article on QS-21: A Potent Vaccine Adjuvant ^[109]. Research on Impact of a Novel Plant-based Treatment Option in Improving Pulmonary Function Markers in Patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease and Asthma by Narinder Singh Parhar and Prevalence and Factors Associated with Parental Traditional Medicine Use for Children in Motta Town, Amhara Regional State, Ethiopia, 2014 by Tenaw Gualu Melesse may serve as an useful work ^[110,111]. Japanese scientist Dr. Shibata MA, Editorial board member of the journal Alternative and Integrative Medicine has written an editorial on A Novel Resveratrol Tetramer Vaticanol C from Stem Bark Acts as an Antimetastatic Action in a Mouse Mammary Cancer Model ^[112]. Various studies and researches carried out by eminent authors like Erica B. Oberg, Chikezie PC, Masanori Niimi, Mohammad Akram Randhawa, Danish Jahan and many more. A Systematic Review on Estimated Effects of Whole-system Naturopathic Medicine in Select Chronic Disease Conditions ^[113]. research on Herbal Medicine: Yesterday, Today and Tomorrow, Induction of Regulatory T Cells and Prolongation of Fully Allogeneic Cardiac Grafts by Herbal Medicine, Shohangekabukuryo-to and Anti-Haemorrhagic Activity of Polyherbal Formulation in Menorrhagia: A Randomized Controlled Trial ^[114-116]. review on Neuropsychiatric Effects of *Nigella sativa* (Black Seed) ^[117-125].

Current Status of Herbal Medicine

Herbal Medicine is also known as people's medicine as it is easily available and safe. It is widely acknowledged for its effectiveness and safety ^[126-131]. Herbal medicines are becoming more popular because of the drawback of side-effects in allopathic medicines. In many developed countries like China, USA, Japan, South Korea and Thailand are using herbal medicine widely even though high quality and modern allopathic medicines and facilities available ^[132-138]. Kampo is one of the herbal based medicines prescribed by 60% to 70% of allopathic doctors in Japan.

In Malaysia, traditional medicines such as Malay, Chinese, and Indian medicines are used widely. Chinese herbal medicines are used extensively in China. Use of herbal medicines has also expanded worldwide and getting popular day by day ^[139]. Various government and non-government reports state that the percentage of the population that has used Alternative and Integrative medicines is 46 per cent in Australia, 49 per cent in France and 70 per cent in Canada.

CONCLUSION

While reviewing the rich history of Herbal Medicine, it is evident that it is the most ancient and form of medicine. Scientist and researches from all over the world are actively in research of herbal medicine. Valuable work and studies has been done by the eminent scientists. The popularity of the Herbal medicine and other Alternative and Integrative medicines is increasing globally. It has many benefits against the side effects by allopathic medicines.

In near future we may expect more detailed researches, conferences and articles in the wide spectrum of Herbal medicines.

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