



GLOBALIZATION OF AYURVEDA: OPPORTUNITIES & DIFFICULTIES

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda, an ancient Indian system of medicine, is gaining popularity worldwide due to its holistic approach and emphasis on natural remedies. One of the key opportunities lies in the increasing acceptance of alternative medicine practices globally, opening avenues for Ayurvedic products and services. Moreover, as people seek healthier lifestyles and sustainable healthcare solutions, Ayurveda emerges as a promising option. However, several difficulties impede its global expansion. Standardization and regulation pose significant challenges, as varying practices and lack of quality control hinder credibility in international markets. Additionally, cultural adaptation and communication barriers must be addressed to make Ayurveda accessible and understandable across diverse populations. Furthermore, competition from established pharmaceutical industries and skepticism from mainstream medical communities pose formidable obstacles. In conclusion, while the globalization of Ayurveda presents promising opportunities for holistic healthcare solutions on a global scale, navigating through regulatory hurdles, cultural disparities, and market competition remains crucial for its sustained growth and acceptance worldwide.

KEYWORDS – Ayurveda, traditional medicine, AYUSH,

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is an ancient traditional system of medicine which has been emerged and practiced in Indian subcontinent. In recent decades, Ayurveda has transcended geographical boundaries and cultural barriers to emerge as a healing system in the mainstay of healthcare system worldwide. As the world battle with the challenges of modern lifestyles and seeks holistic approaches to well-being, Ayurveda has garnered attention for its holistic principles, safe medications, and natural remedies. Even has gained the attention for its preventive therapies and its efficacy to maintain the health of healthy Individual (स्वस्थस्य स्वास्थ्य रक्षणम्, आतुरस्य विकार प्रशमनं ||). This paper explores the factors contributing to the global spread of Ayurveda, its impact on International healthcare, and the challenges and opportunities associated with its globalization.

The globalization of Ayurveda stands as a testament to the enduring appeal and universal relevance of this ancient Indian system of medicine. The journey of Ayurveda's globalization is marked by collaborative efforts, scientific research, government initiatives, educational programs, and a burgeoning market for Ayurvedic products and services across the globe. As Ayurveda continues to bridge cultural divides and find resonance in diverse societies, its globalization not only fosters cross-cultural exchanges but also contributes to a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to global healthcare.

According to the research report conducted by the Forum on Indian Traditional Medicine (FITM) under the Research and Information System for Developing Countries (RIS), the Ayush industry's market size reached US\$ 18.1 billion (equivalent to INR 1,49,451 Crore at the current INR-Dollar rate) in 2020, a significant increase from the US\$ 2.85 billion (INR 23,532 Crore at the current INR-Dollar rate) reported in 2014-15 (Goraya and Ved).¹

To bolster the export of Ayush products and services, promote international co-operation, and enhance recognition of Ayush medicine globally, the Ministry has introduced the Central Sector Scheme for Promotion of International Co-operation in Ayush (IC Scheme).

This initiative supports Indian Ayush manufacturers and service providers, encourages international market development, fosters stakeholder interactions, establishes Ayush Academic Chairs in foreign countries, and conducts training workshops and symposiums to raise awareness about Ayush Systems of Medicine on an international scale.

In collaboration with the Ministry of Commerce and Industry, the Ministry of AYUSH has established the AYUSH Export Promotion Council, focusing on the export promotion of



Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, Siddha, Sowa Rigpa, and Unani medicines, products, and services related to AYUSH system.

Recently, Ministry of Ayush has taken the following steps to push exports globally - The Ministry has entered into various Country-to-Country Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) to foster collaboration. Furthermore, 15 MoUs have been established with international institutes to establish AYUSH Academic Chairs in foreign nations. The Ministry of AYUSH has extended its support for the establishment of 39 AYUSH Information Cells across 35 foreign nations. The Ayush Export Promotion Council was officially registered under section 8(4) of the Companies Act 2013 on January 4, 2022, within the Ministry of AYUSH. This registration, conducted in coordination with the Ministry of Corporate Affairs, aims to address challenges related to the registration of AYUSH products abroad and to conduct market studies and research activities on a global scale.²

FACTORS CONTRIBUTING FOR GLOBALIZATION

❖ Collaborations with other countries

The Governing bodies and healthcare organizations have seen the potential of Ayurveda and played a crucial key link in Globalization by establishing new collaboration, signing memorandums with different countries.

Integration in the field of education of Indian system of medicine in the foreign healthcare courses is a way to global spread of Ayurveda.

The integration of traditional medical practice with modern health care practice is a main step for globalization and equitability of Ayurveda system of medicine.

❖ Rapid increase in Awareness and Interest

People all over the world are looking for alternatives as traditional treatments and are becoming more interested in holistic well-being and preventive healthcare. These changing health preferences are in line with Ayurveda as it emphasizes on preventive measures and maintains the health of healthier people.

❖ Commercialization of Brands/ Products

The commercialization of Ayurvedic products and the emergence of global Ayurvedic brands have significantly contributed to its globalization. These products, ranging from herbal supplements to skin care products, are now available in international markets, further familiarizing people with Ayurveda.

❖ Digital World

The digital era has facilitated the rapid dissemination of information. Social media, wellness blogs, online platforms have played a crucial role in spreading awareness about Ayurveda. The connection via digital consultations has helped a lot in reaching the audience throughout the globe. Individual's share their personal experience and success stories, a global community interested in Ayurveda practices has emerged.

❖ Attitude of sharing Information

The traditional system of medicine is now open to share and provides the knowledge to the community worldwide. For that publication of data has gained a momentum hence

achieved a attention and generated a curiosity globally.

❖ Consistent efforts of Ministry

Because of the consistent efforts of AYUSH, various countries have recognized Ayurveda and brought an era for its Globalization. For this, many achievements are bagged by AYUSH ministry.

OPPORTUNITIES AND ITS BENEFITS

The globalization of Ayurveda brings forth a myriad of benefits, impacting not only individual health and wellness but also contributing to broader societal and economic advantages. Here are some vital Opportunities and benefits with the global spread of Ayurveda.

❖ **Establishment of Ayurveda knowledge** - Being an Ayurveda physician its always our duty to glorify the beauty of Ayurveda to external World. This Globalization has given a wonderful opportunity to show the wonders of Ayurveda.

❖ **New Education system at Global level** - Due to awareness, many people are interested to learn the basic of Ayurveda which may be a revolutionary phase for the establishment the era of Ayurveda. This scope of learning will help and make the individuals independent to practice Ayurveda. Full-fledged Government Ayurveda hospitals or clinics in foreign countries may attract and create hub in the society.

❖ **Broaden the opportunities for NRI students** - In India, in the field of Ayurveda, their seats are limited, it can be increased. This step will be beneficial to increase the interest of an individual to learn and practice Ayurveda. Even various fellowship courses can become their courses of learning.

❖ **Empowerment** - Empowerment in health system is always a major contribution to the society Worldwide. Which can be provided by uniting hands to foreign health associations.

❖ **Career opportunity** - It gives rise to flourish and develop educational programs and training centres hence leads to increase in the surge of experts. Opens new ways to work or practice for healthcare workers such as therapists, experts and physicians. For Pharmaceutical industries it helps in building brands or commercializing their products.

❖ **Opportunity for skill development:** The globalization of Ayurveda creates opportunities for skill development thus, can create a workfield as a skilled workforce for Practice of traditional medicine.

❖ **The Economic Growth** - The commercialization of Ayurvedic products and services on a global scale opens up economic opportunities. This includes the growth of ayurvedic wellness centres, the export of Ayurvedic products and the development of a global market for Ayurvedic treatment. This can stimulate economic growth in regions with a strong tradition of Ayurveda as the global market size is very huge. In Macro- perspective, an increase in the opportunities for the market can expand economy in turn can raise the GDP.

❖ **Integration with Other Health care Systems:** The integration of ayurveda with other health care systems enhances the diversity of available treatments and will help to serve the society by utilizing the specialization of each



system. Collaboration between traditional Ayurvedic practitioners and modern healthcare professionals can lead to the development of integrated healthcare programs that combine the strength of both systems.

- ❖ The WHO Global Centre for Traditional Medicine is being established in Jamnagar under the Ministry of AYUSH, is the only centre established in the entire globe. The traditional medicine has been a main resource for health and wellness in various countries thus, to provide a position to AYUSH system in the globe it's a vital step.
- ❖ **Emergence of Wellness cultural tourism:** The global interest in ayurveda can drive wellness and cultural tourism. Individuals seeking authentic Ayurvedic treatments or experiences may travel to regions with a strong Ayurvedic tradition, contributing to the tourism industry and creating cultural exchange opportunities. Thus, people from diverse backgrounds are exposed to ancient Indian wisdom, creating a bridge between different cultures and promoting mutual understanding and respect.
- ❖ **Overall Holistic Healthcare Approach** – Ayurveda offers a holistic approach to health and wellness, considering the interconnectedness of body, mind and spirit. As it gains recognition globally, more individuals are likely to benefit from a healthcare system that addresses the root causes of ailments and emphasizes overall well-being.
- ❖ **Preventive Healthcare Practice:** Ayurveda strongly emphasizes on preventive healthcare through lifestyle modifications as per seasons, dietary recommendations, daily routine activities that brings an equilibrium state of vital forces of our body. The globalization of ayurveda encourages individuals to adopt proactive health measures, potentially reducing the burden on healthcare systems by preventing diseases before they manifest.
- ❖ **Promotes Natural Living** – Ayurveda relies on simple natural remedies derived from herbs and minerals that aligns with the global movement towards natural and sustained living. The use of organic and locally sourced ingredients promotes environmentally friendly practices, contributing to a more sustainable approach to healthcare.
- ❖ **Gear up the scientific researches** – The international acceptance of Ayurveda encourages scientific research and validation of its principles and practices. Collaborative efforts between Ayurveda experts and Modern researchers can lead to a better understanding of the efficacy and targets of Ayurvedic treatments which further enhances its credibility.
- ❖ **Gained popularity because of Unique way of Treatment:** The various diseases such as mental health issues, immune system-based diseases, chronic diseases and lifestyle disorders are current health issues which can be managed well with Ayurveda line of treatment is accepted worldwide.

STEPS CAN BE TAKEN FOR GLOBALIZATION

- ❖ Medical tourism – The area can be excelled more to make India as a hub or a center of destination of medical tourism. Indian government with collaboration of Institutes of India and foreign can achieve this goal.

- ❖ Need to analyze the Global demands and expectations from health care systems can keep us a step forward for globalization.
- ❖ Government E- learning platforms can be created to spread the Ayurveda.
- ❖ Expedite the Research process: There is a need to generate data and evidences for Ayurveda drugs, rapidly. We are well aware about the benefits of drugs that if they are used in proper dosage, after proper purification, for particular duration and at the correct stage of disease then they always work as nectar. But as there are many drugs which are banned in other countries, if we generate their efficacy and safety results, the entire globe will happily accept all those drugs. Hence, to put forth this knowledge in front of the entire globe, need to accelerate the research process and generate evidences. This can be achieved with the help of technology. This process can be boosted by providing scholarships to the researchers at institute levels also.
- ❖ Technology - The collaboration of old traditional knowledge with technology is a major step for innovation and expansion of Ayurveda.
- ❖ Various ground level steps can be taken with the help of media for international promotion.
- ❖ A backbone of support is Pharmacovigilance – There should be strict check on the safety and adverse reaction of the drugs which are exporting as well as circulating in Indian market. It will boost the standard practice and help the society.
- ❖ Hunger to Help Humanity – If desperately the goal of globalization of Ayurveda is - Giving prime importance to the health or for the betterment of society health, not just for the name and fame in World. Then there is no any other satisfaction achieved by this Globalization.
- ❖ Ayurveda not only a system of health for Human beings but it's also a science of healing for Animals and Plants. Hence among these three branches of Ayurveda the other two branches i.e. the Pashu Ayurveda (Healthcare system for Animals) and Vruksha Ayurveda (Healing system for Plants) is often neglected. Which can be a great opportunity in future for globalization.
- ❖ There is a need to work more and always stay with the core strength and principles (*Sidhanta*) of Ayurveda even though it's expanding overseas.
- ❖ The Governing bodies should make norms throughout the world but need to be peculiar to particular country so that it will be easy to target particular audience and provide health support to particular country.
- ❖ Some portals such as AYUSH portals can be assessable to all the people worldwide who are joined in the phase of learning Ayurveda.
- ❖ Global Ayurveda Conferences can serve as a link to unite various countries for expansion of Ayurveda.
- ❖ Can conduct Global symposiums / workshops at international level for promoting and strengthening AYUSH system.
- ❖ Foreign approach of Government funded healthcare System – Health insurance and accessibility in developed countries could be favorable thing for establishment of Ayurveda. Even the Indian government should also come



forward with the plans of freehealthcare system to all the Citizens of India.

CHALLENGES OF GLOBALIZATION OF AYURVEDA

- ❖ **Standardization and regulation:** The lack of standardized practices and regulations possess a challenge to the global acceptance of Ayurveda.
Solution: The developing international standards for education, drug production, quality control and practice will be essential to establish Ayurveda as a credible and safe healthcare option.
- ❖ **Difficult to export the Ayurveda drugs/ product:** Because the global opinion for the herbo – mineral drugs is they are unsafe to practice.
Solution: There is always an issue in getting license or approval of drugs for its exportation to foreign countries. The solution can be done by generating the safety and efficacy data of drugs by clinical research.
- ❖ **Ayurveda is deeply rooted in Indian culture and philosophy.** For globalization, there is a challenge in adapting its principles to different cultural contexts while respecting its origins is crucial for successful integration with other healthcare systems in different horizons.
Solution: Effective communication and education are essential to convey the cultural relevance and benefits of Ayurveda.
- ❖ **Lack of scientific validation:** In many countries the Ayurveda is perceived as traditional knowledge without sufficient scientific validation.
Solution: More research studies and clinical trials are needed to provide the evidence of efficacy and safety of Ayurvedic treatment.
- ❖ **Language barrier – Ayurvedic texts and terminologies** are often in Sanskrit creating a language barrier for International individuals and researchers.
Solution: Translating and simplifying the Ayurvedic knowledge in multiple languages is necessary for global accessibility.
- ❖ **Resistance to change :** Some countries, still resist to adopt other system of medicines due to their own established health care systems and cultural beliefs.
Solutions: It requires an effective communication, community engagement and by showcasing the benefits of Ayurveda will help to overcome this issue.
- ❖ **Lack of cultivation of herbs** is a challenge to meet the global needs.
Solution: To meet the global demands, the production of herbs has to be planned accordingly. The cultivation in India should be started at zonal as well as district levels. For this, there is a need of collaboration with Agricultural science to aware and guide local population for cultivation of hybrid herbs. Even memorandums can be signed to export raw drugs from other countries.
- ❖ **Limited education, awareness and resources -** Many people around the world are not familiar with Ayurveda.
Solution: Increase awareness and providing accessible education about Ayurveda principles and practices are crucial for its global acceptance.

- ❖ **Misinformation or myths related to Ayurveda practice** is also a challenge.
Solution: Addressing misconceptions and promoting transparent communication about Ayurvedic practices is essential.
- ❖ **There is challenge to accept the diagnostic approach and treatment principles of Ayurveda.**
Solution: Need to simplify the concepts in an understandable way will be a crucial step for its acceptance.

IMPACT OF GLOBALISATION OF AYURVEDA ON HEALTHCARE SYSTEM

- ❖ **Holistic Healthcare Approach:** Ayurveda's holistic approach to healthcare, addressing the root cause of ailments rather than just symptoms, has influenced how individuals perceive their well-being. Integrating Ayurvedic principles into mainstream healthcare encourages a more comprehensive and patient centric approach.
- ❖ **Natural remedies and Sustainable practices:** Ayurveda's reliance on natural ingredients and sustainable practices aligns with the global movement towards eco-friendly and sustainable living. As people seek alternatives that are both effective and environmentally conscious, Ayurveda provides a compelling option.

CONCLUSION

The globalization of Ayurveda marks a significant shift in how the world approaches healthcare. As ancient wisdom meets modern wellness, Ayurveda has the potential to offer a holistic, personalized and sustainable approach to health. While difficulties or challenges exist but the opportunities for collaboration, research and cultural adaption present a promising future for Ayurveda on the global stage. As individuals increasingly seek harmony between nature and health, Ayurveda stands as a beacon of ancient wisdom, contributing to the evolution of a more holistic and integrative approach to well-being worldwide. This globalization will boost the growth of AYUSH Industry. In conclusion, the globalization of Ayurveda represents a profound and transformative journey that transcends geographical boundaries, cultural differences, and traditional healthcare paradigms. As Ayurveda gains attention worldwide, it brings with it a holistic perspective on well-being, emphasizing the interconnectedness of mind, body, and spirit. The collaborative efforts, research initiatives, and international partnerships have not only propelled Ayurveda into the mainstream but have also contributed to a more inclusive and integrative approach to healthcare.

In essence, the globalization of Ayurveda is not just a cross-cultural exchange but a celebration of the timeless wisdom encapsulated in this ancient system of medicine. It signifies a harmonious integration of traditional practices with modern healthcare, offering a comprehensive approach to health that resonates with a global audience. As Ayurveda continues to evolve and adapt, its journey across borders serves as an inspiring model for the cross-pollination of knowledge and the enrichment of global health landscapes.



“Time to glorify the beauty of Ayurveda to External World”

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