



MENTAL DISORDERS AND THE HOMOEOPATHIC HEALING APPROACH

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ABSTRACT

About the article in brief This article deals with a subject for the masses who go through mental issues in daily lives. Broadly these issues are clubbed as mental health issues out of which the commonest of all these mental health problems are discussed here. While the modern medicine through psychiatric treatment deals with the problem with chemical medications for the brain, this article focuses on Homoeopathic system of medicine. Homoeopathy is clinically effective, cost effective and has no side effects. As all the homoeopathic medicines go through human clinical trial or proved on human beings, all medicines have a mental aspect of symptoms during the trials. This shows that there are N numbers of medicines in homoeopathy for the mental health issues in general. The current piece deals with some of the leading medicines based on the clinical experience of the lead author. Readers are requested to consult a qualified homoeopath before starting medication to have a desired result. The reader will get an idea of the problem at global & national level through the eyes of public health in the beginning sections before delving in to the Homoeopathic system of the AYUSH platform. Currently, the AYUSH platform has regained its value in the era of the current pandemic. The article can-not substitute the physical interaction between a homoeopath & the patient seeking treatment. **Background** The current article looks into the aspects of mental disorders during the life period out of which depression is one of the main disorders. The article looks into the brief history of public health programs on mental health in India & the emergence of maternal mental health as an issue. It moves on to the current situation on mental disorders in India & the role of Homoeopathy to deal with these disorders therapeutically as a component of Ministry of AYUSH. The article suggests the integration of medical pluralism in mental health through inclusion of Homoeopathy in the gamete of mental health. As each & every drug in Homoeopathy is only proved on human beings, all the drugs have a mental component as it is only human beings who can express their physical & mental symptoms during proving of the drugs as per the guidelines set by the Homoeopathic Research Councils (HRC) of each nation. In India, Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy, an autonomous body under the ministry of AYUSH lays out such guidelines. The article gains more relevance during the current COVID 19 pandemic which has precipitated the stress levels of population since March 2020 and most of them are more prone to mental disorders during their life stage.

KEYWORDS :**INTRODUCTION**^{7,8,9,10,13}

Health care as a tradition has prioritised the physical health & not the mental health. The first mental health legislation in India was the Indian Lunacy Act in 1912 in the British era. It

took India 70 years to conceptualize the National Mental Health program in 1982. Regarding legislation, the nation took 75 years as the Mental Health Act passed in parliament on 22nd May 1987 superseded the act of 1912. Further, the

Mental Health Care Act passed in parliament on 7th April 2017 which came into force from 7th July 2018 superseded the act of 1987. Besides other changes, the most significant change in this act was to de-criminalize suicides.

Progressing further, the country conceptualized the District Mental Health program in 1996. This program was re-strategized in 2003 to include two schemes i.e. modernization of state mental hospital & up-gradation of psychiatric wings of medical colleges & general hospitals. Currently, with the backing up of Supreme Court, the nation has a state mental health board as well as a district mental health board as an active arm to augment the mental health programs & the mental health component of the National Health Mission.

Similarly, the Indian Systems of Medicine & Homoeopathy (ISMH) became a department in 1995 across all the states & the centre. Prior to that, the ISMH was operational through directorates at both state & centre level under the department of Health & Family Welfare. The ISMH was renamed as Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Homoeopathy & Sowa Rigpa (AYUSH) department in 2003. Sowa Rigpa system of therapeutics was added in Central Council of Indian Medicine in 2012. The department was converted to a Ministry in November 2014.

On the mental health front in Homoeopathic system of medicine, the Regional Research Institute under the Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy came up in 1974 in Kottayam, Kerala. It was upgraded to Central Research Institute for Homoeopathy in 1982. Further, the institute was upgraded as National Homoeopathy Research Institute in Mental Health (NHRIMH) in 2016.

In the field of Maternal & Child Health (MCH), the maternal health component got focus through the launch of National Rural Health Mission (NRHM) in 2005 where the District Level Mental Health Program was the most active component of NHM to promote mental health care. Gradually, the mental health aspects of the masses came to the forefront after reshaping the district mental health program in 2003 through the mental health component of NHM.

About the common mental disorders^{1,2,3,4,5,6}

WHO report of 2019 on mental health tells us that one in every 8 persons and 14% of world's adolescents suffer from some kind of mental disorders. Further, the report mentions that suicides account for more than 1 in 100 deaths yearly which is more than those due to HIV, Malaria and Breast Cancer. The 2022 report mentions that there has been 13% increase in mental health conditions and substance use disorders in the last decade.

In India, the National Crime Records Bureau informs that 1, 64,003 cases of suicides took place in India in 2001. This was 7.2% more than the year 2020. In 2021, 13,039 students died by suicide.

The COVID 19 pandemic led to 25% increase in mental disorders in 2021 and it was attributed to Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). PTSD occurrence was attributed to prolonged isolation, loss of business, loss of work and direct physiological involvement of virus.

Another article informs that symptoms of anxiety and depression (16-28%) and 8% self reported stress are common psychological reactions to COVID 19 and may be associated with disturbed sleep.

About the category of mental disorders^{5,6}

Anxiety and depressive disorders are classified as "Triggered" class of mental disorders. Anxiety disorders lead to excess

worrying and phobia that leads to a condition called hypochondria. Panic attacks, social anxiety disorder and separation anxiety disorders are classified as panic disorders.

Depression has unusual mood oscillations in life where symptoms like feeling sad, overwhelmingly display of irritability, distinct lack of pleasure and lack of interest in activities for at least 2 weeks.

The overlapping symptoms of depression can be lack of concentration, hopelessness, guilt feeling, low self esteem, suicidal thoughts and heightened insomnia, variations in appetite and weight, lack of energy.

The mental disorders that are of genetic origin are Schizophrenia, Bipolar disorder, Obsessive Compulsion Disorder (OCD) and Neuro-developmental disorders like Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) and Autism.

For cases of panic attacks, 'Cortisone' is to be prescribed in potencies. At the molecular level, anxiety and depressive disorders show imbalance of neurotransmitters like serotonin, nor-epinephrine, and dopamine faulty signalling network or cascade.

Prognosis and care^{5,6,14}

Advances in neurobehavioral researches show psychological counselling are effective in anxiety and depression. Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) helps to overcome mental state through behavioural and thought modulation. Meditations guided Inner Engineering & Yoga help alleviate the symptoms.

Hence, it can be inferred that a combination approach of Homoeopathy and Psychotherapy help to deal with mental issues permanently. The society has to be receptive at large and people should talk about these issues.

Homoeopathic approach²⁰

The first brush of Homoeopathy in mental disorders started in 1792 when Dr. Christian Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843) became the medical officer of a mental asylum in Georgenthal in the district of Thuringerwald, Gotha in the divided Germany of that era. During his stint from 1792-1793 in the asylum, he had advocated Psychotherapy for the mental patients which currently is practiced. In 1796, he published a case report of a patient named Klockenbrung suffering from Insanity who was treated with Homoeopathic medicine & psychotherapy. It is significant to note that globally there were very few mental specialists at that point of time.

As already mentioned above, all Homoeopathic medicine has mental symptoms as the drugs are proved on human beings. Given below are Homoeopathic medicines that are primarily from four sources. These are H.C. Allen's Key notes, Robin Murphy's Materia Medica, Phatak's Materia Medica & Boericke's Materia Medica. These four text books are used to teach homoeopathic students who become qualified homoeopaths later. The treatment plans for the mental disorders mentioned above are given below.

Homoeopathic treatment protocol^{15to24}

Specifics

- In the beginning, the specific medicines are mentioned in the protocol as per the disorders mentioned above.
- For cases of Schizophrenia, the medicines are 'Annaholinum Lewinni', 'Haloperidol', 'Halcion', 'Phenazone' are to be prescribed in potencies.
- For cases of ADHD and Autism, 'Ritalin' is to be prescribed in potencies.
- To bring Tranquility of the brain, 'MDMA' is to be

prescribed in potencies.

- For OCD cases, 'Prozac' is to be prescribed in potencies.
- For cases of depression, anxiety, grief and insomnia, 'Albizia Julibrissin' and 'Amphetaminum Sufuricum' is to be prescribed in potencies.
- For cases of anxiety, 'Valium' is to be prescribed in potencies.
- For cases of nervous excitability, 'Camphor Bromata' is to be prescribed in potencies.
- For cases of delirium tremens, 'Pastinaca' is to be prescribed in potencies.
- For cases of delirium along with depression, 'Morphine' and 'Lobelia Syphilitica' is to be prescribed in potencies.
- For morbid conscience or intention, 'Spiralea Ulmaria' and 'Lac Felinum' is to be prescribed in potencies.
- For cases of anorexia nervosa, 'Amphetaminum Sulfuricum' is to be prescribed in potencies.
- For disorders related to neurotransmitters, medicines like 'Serotonin', 'Dopamine' and 'Renine' are to be prescribed in potencies.

Conventionals

All cases should be prescribed medicines like 'Zinc Phos', 'Five Phos', Mustard (Bach Flower Remedy), Dysentery Compound (Bowel Nosode). The first is a short spectrum drug but gives satisfactory results while treating depression cases through application of high potencies.

The second one is a mixture of five tissue salts that act as a specific for toning up of brain & nerve health. Preferably, prescribe in tablet to avoid extra sugar in syrup form that may not help in the case.

The third one is a specific called 'Mustard' that is prescribed for depression as a Bach Flower remedy. All the 38 remedies under Bach Flower category are exclusively used for various mental disorders. Prescribe in 30th potency as these are available in 30th potencies only. The qualified homoeopath can choose from the bulk of the Bach Flower remedies & prescribe these medicines in grouping.

The last medicine, a Bowel Nosode called 'Dysentery Compound' in Homoeopathy is named as 'anticipatory type of nervous tension' remedy. Prescribe in 30th potency as these medicines are primarily available in 30th potencies.

CONCLUSION[®]

As all drugs in homoeopathy have a group of mental symptoms, Homoeopathy is and will be effective against mental disorders in general & especially for all mood related mental disorders. The current article adds another feather in the Homoeopathic cap as it can deal with the probable upcoming of large number of cases of depression in view of high stress levels due to the ongoing COVID 19 crisis. However, it should be also seen that along with constitutional/deep acting/polychrest homoeopathic medicines, specific medicines are also required to deal with the cases. Simultaneously, nutrition, counselling and all psychic health modalities like psychotherapy are adhered in each case.

In fact, the detailed case taking of a case & empathetic hearing are the elements of supportive psychotherapy. The Homoeopathic approach of case-taking/anamnesis exactly fits into the criteria of supportive psychotherapy. Hence, as a part of treatment, the supportive psychotherapy is inherent in Homoeopathic treatment. Green leafy vegetables & nuts are to be added in the diet in order to enable the body to improve brain functions. The vegetarians should be supplemented with Vitamin B12 & Zinc supplements as these are good for nerve health & diets of vegetarians lack these nutrients. The primary sources of these two supplements are sea food & non-vegetarian foods. The Homoeopathic fraternity should be ready to cover the masses as there is no other therapeutic

system that can cover the masses effectively while being economical and cost effective. Simultaneously, it has a wide range of medicines as seen in the contents of the sections mentioned above.

Burden of Disease^{25,26,27}



Figure 1- India at a glance, 2020, SRS Bulletin, May 2022, Volume 55, Number 1

The current birth rate of India is 19.5 per 1000 population or the current Crude Birth Rate of India is 19.5. As per World Bank, the current projected population in India as in the year 2021 is 140.76 crores (population projection, 2021). As mentioned above, using the birth rate of 19.5, the number of births in 2023 will be 2,74,46,250 the birth cohort. The assumption used here is that there are no abortions, maternal deaths & still births and these are not accounted to illustrate the example in a simple manner. From the above sections of the article, it is seen that as per WHO, 14% of adolescents and one in every 8 persons suffer from some kind of mental disorders. The number of adolescents in India will be 16.2% of the total population as per census 2011 & the number is 22,80,15,000 and as per WHO, 14% of these adolescents will suffer from any kind of mental disorder and the number turns out to be 31,92,21,00. This figure has gone up in 2021 because of the 25% increase in cases in comparison to 2020 because of COVID 19 crisis in 2019-2020. The number after the 25% increase will be 39,90,26,25. These many adolescents in India have some kind of mental disorder currently.

This reflects the magnitude of the problem as well as the steps that the nation needs to take to deal with the crisis. Obviously, the Crude Death Rate (suicide deaths) & the Infant Mortality Rate (mental health of mothers would also be affected) would also be impacted accordingly.

Declaration of the lead author

Prof. Shankar Das was the Ph.D. guide of the lead author at Tata Institute of Social Sciences, Mumbai. The lead author also certifies that he has expressed his personal opinion based upon his public health and clinical experiences. The treatment approach or the medicines suggested are only suggestive in nature.

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