

REQUIREMENT OF SCIENTIFIC DOCUMENTATION FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF NATUROPATHY

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ABSTRACT

Past few decades have witnessed explosion of knowledge in almost every field. This has resulted not only in the advancement of the subjects in particular but also have influenced the growth of various allied subjects. The present paper explains about the advancement of science through efforts made in specific areas and also through discoveries in different allied fields having an indirect influence upon the subject in proper. In Naturopathy this seems that though nothing particular is added to the basic thoughts or fundamental principles of the subject yet the entire treatment understanding is revolutionised under the influence of scientific discoveries of past few decades. Advent of information technology has further added to the boom of knowledge and many times this seems impossible to utilize these informations for the good of human being because these are not logically arranged in our minds. In the above background, the author tries to define documentation stating that we have today ocean of information and knowledge about various things- living or dead, plants, animals or human beings; the geographical conditions or changing weather and environment. What required to be done is to extract the relevant knowledge and information required to enrich the subject. The author compares documentation with churning of milk to extract butter. Documentation, in fact, is churning of ocean of information to extract the specific, most appropriate, relevant and defined information and knowledge related to the particular subject. The paper besides discussing the definition of documentation, highlights the areas of Naturopathy requiring an urgent necessity to make proper documentations. Paper also discusses the present status of Naturopathy in India, proposes short term and long term goals to be achieved and plans the strategies for achieving them. The most important aspect of the paper is due understanding of the limitations of Naturopathy but a constant effort to improve the same with the growth made in various discipline of science so far.

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Introduction

There was a time when even science and philosophy were considered as part of the same subject . The time has changed now. Today there are more than 250 subjects of learning with independent departments in the universities. According to de Solla Price, the American Science Historian's statistics "the number of scientists doubled in every 15 years in the past and present speculation is that this number will be doubling every 10 years". We are living with almost 87% of the scientists who have ever lived on this earth. This briefly indicates the trend of accumulation of knowledge at the present in comparison to the past. With the increase in knowledge aquisition the pattern of transmission and storage of this also transformed from verbal to stone engraving, from leaves to paper writing and from wooden block printing to electronic storage and transmission.

Naturopathy as the name suggests is the science dealing with health and disease of living being based upon natural law. The word was first coined by Dr. John H. Scheel in 1895 and sold out to Benedict Lust around 1900 for being used by Kneipp water cure therapists in U.S.A. With the passage of time this word has assumed a new meaning representing a global minority health movement based on body's self adjusting and healing mechanism depended upon vitality within the body to which the practitioners of this system help to multiply and function by removing obstacles on its way without using any drug and by simply encouraging right living, eating, dressing etc. in tune with constructive principles of nature.

Naturopathy and Nature Cure are synonyms gaining global recognition. The movement of Naturopathy commenced way back in mid eighteenth century accrediting a simple farmer of Silesian mountains in Austria named Vincent Priessnitz (1799-1851) as its originator (Father) and attracting some very illustrious personalities from various walk of life and professions like 1. Johann Scroth (1798-1856), 2. Sebastian Kneipp (1821-1897), 3. Louis Kuhne (1844-1907), 4. Adolf Just (1838-1936), 5. Arnold Ehret

(1866-1922), 6. John H. Tilden (1851-1940), 7. Henry Lindlahr (1853-1924), 8. John Harvey Kellog (1852-1943), 9. Bernard Macfadden (1868-1955), 10. Benedict Lust (1872-1945) etc. to contribute their might in propagation and advancement of this science through their untiring labour and dedication. They have enriched the subject through their own writings and through establishment of school of thoughts which has further propagated the ideas conceived by them.

Unfortunately, as usually happens with popular movements and words, the word (nature) also been abused frequently for ulterior benefits and has created confusion by identifying Naturopathy as some form of *Āyurvēda* or other traditional systems and at time with various drugless therapies. Un reviewed publications and documentations by people of mediocre intellect have badly contributed to the distortion of the subject. Mahatma Gandhi” who also claimed himself to be an ardent follower and practitioner of this Science was attracted towards this science not only because of the simplicity and clarity of basic principle and practices of this science easily understandable to a layman for getting rid of the diseases and remain fit by observing the rules uplifting himself physically, mentally, morally, socially but also because this science confirm to non-violence movement as well.

The principles of Naturopathy finds un-natural living as the basic cause of disease. Accumulation of toxins (morbid matter) resulting form unhealthy lifestyle and faulty functioning of the excretory organs acts as the primary cause of disease. Acute physical reactions to the disease intends to work as healing mechanism of the body indicating availability of adequate vitality essential for over powering the disease force. Suppression of these acute reactions can lead to chronic sufferings which require further higher levels of vital forces to be combated with. However, it should not be assumed that the inflexible nature of its principles may lead to stagnancy in this discipline. There is tremendous scope for study modification and advancement in various other aspects of this science such as in the field of diagnostic methods, treatment methodologies and management to the convenience of both practitioners and patients as well as to the propagation and furtherance of this science.

The strategies of documentation in relation to Naturopathy are required to be defined in the above stated historical background and stagnant and changeable factor of this science. Information may be looked upon as one of the basic necessity of life. Documentation serves for the availability and dissemination of information which not only facilitate development but also controls damage. Thousands of patients die every year because they don't know where to go for their treatment. Even best of the specialists at times find themselves helpless to advice incurable patients as to do what. This is because most of the practitioners and specialists of various disciplines have either vague or no knowledge of alternative systems including Naturopathy. Consequently they fail to do justice to properly advice such cases which are easily amenable in systems like Naturopathy but which are not amenable by them. Many time patients want to go for Naturopathy treatment under some competent physician or institution but they don't know such institutions and competent physicians. In view of significance of update information, the creation of effective system of information is an important element of responsibility for organizations working in the field of Naturopathy.

Any information which is inadequate or inauthentic can result in great damage too and such mis-information at times lead to regression of the pace of development of science. Therefore, the documentation should be as far as possible based on authentic material derived from authentic sources.

We have today bulk of information about almost everything known to the human mind, whether they are living biological beings like plants or animals, bacteria or virus or non-living things like metals or rocks or whether they are abstract things of parapsychology or metaphysics or whether they are about Geographical conditions, changing weather or environment. Whenever we do documentation of a particular subject we are to take into account various information available on the particular subject as well as on the related subjects. It is just like churning of the milk to extract butter. Documentation is the churning of ocean of information to extract the specific, appropriate, relevant and exact information related to subject matter.

Naturopathy is not an isolated science. It is related with a number of medical as well as non-medical subjects. In fact there is nothing on this earth which is not related

to life. Everything in this universe in one or the other way effect the living beings howsoever distant or near they may be so much so that minute changes in different planets and stars do effect the living beings on earth. Therefore, the relation of Naturopathy with other sciences is even larger than other sciences. The effectiveness of Naturopathy depends not only upon the knowledge of isolated actions and reactions of various therapeutic applications or the course of disease but also upon sound and exact knowledge of different laws operating in Nature which effect life. A good part of the documentation done so far in Naturopathy regarding its efficacy and on various other aspects are frankly speaking aimed mainly at propagating the science, making the movement popular and making claims of superiority but grossly lacking proper scientific explanations, reasons, logic, data, reference, etc. which are in fact back bone of a sound and authentic document.

In lack of such back bone material in the Naturopathy literature, it could attract only the masses to its fold but not the intelligent, fertile, disciplined and scientific minds resulting in slow pace of its development. This is mainly because most of the stalwarts of this field were ordinary persons of different walks of life who were hardly acquainted with scientific or medical knowledge and presentations. However, some of those who had crossed over to Naturopathy form Medical field, though very little in number, have done yeomen work of interpretation of Naturopathy and its efficacy in such a language which is palatable to highest medical and scientific minds. Name of Dr. Henry Lindlahr and John Harvey Kellogg can be specially quoted to cite example of such stalwarts who have produced such authentic and scientific literature which is highly popular and highly appreciated by scientific community but a lot more is required to be done by encouraging all those who are gifted with literary talent. With the growing popularity of the science and its coming to professional standards academic institutions like Health Universities are taking interest and colleges with 5 ½ years of graduate level learning in Naturopthy are coming up. Therefore, the immediate task before the Naturopathy community is to create authentic text books for the students undergoing such long term University Degree Courses.

This task can only be achieved if the churning of available literature produced so far and experiences of the stalwarts in the field supported with findings of whatsoever little research done so far are compiled together under the expert hands who are experienced and competent enough to churn out and extract exact needful material to provide standard literature.

The 2nd immediate task is establishment of a Library and Information Centre under some existing Naturopathy set up specially for Naturopathy literature as a first step which should in due course of time be transformed into an independent Naturopathy Information and Documentation Centre (NIDC) serving to the needs of information seekers of Naturopathy form all over the globe.

The long term goals of Naturopathy should include among others to do research on various untouched subjects related to Naturopathy including the new form of diseases coming up due to environmental and lifestyle changes; and to produce man power of high order possessing post graduate specializations in these objectives and, therefore, should occupy as the highest priority task. Apart from further standardization of the text books based on update information and knowledge, compilation and preparation of text books to serve the needs of PG students is to be done in course of about 10 years.

The effectiveness of Naturopathy depends much upon exact application of the right forces of Nature in right directions. This starts from eating and drinking to sleeping and rest and from reading and thinking to beliefs and faiths. Without right knowledge instead of allowing inherent, healing powers and potentiality of the body to manifest, cure and up build itself one may unknowingly obstruct the healing forces to work. The role of Naturopathy practitioners lies in removing obstacles and allowing life forces to work better but for that they also require command of a few other subjects. The task is not so easy as it looks. For that a detailed survey is required to be done and wide statistical information on effects of various aspects of the life style, culture, value etc. on human health and disease is required to be collected. This task requires collective efforts of experts of various disciplines for prolonged period of time combined with effective documentation.

The Science of Naturopathy has its own limitations too. It may not work where the vitality of the body has gone below certain level of requisite where parts of the body or organs have become depleted or destroyed beyond the limits of body's own repair mechanism or where due to trauma or hostile environmental conditions some surgical or other methods of interventions have become necessary. Therefore, whatsoever documentation is done, they should not include exaggerated claims but should restrict to the defined boundaries in the larger interest of practitioners, patients and human welfare.

Conclusion

Preservation of Naturopathy in its true shape depends much upon its literature. Proper documentation is most essential part to keep the science to its path. Therefore, the most important task before the Naturopathy community is to find ways to execute such yeomen task for the development of this science and welfare of the humanity.

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सारांश

प्राकृतिक चिकित्सा के विकास के लिए वैज्ञानिक प्रलेखन की आवश्यकता

राजीव रस्तोगी

पिछले कुछ दशकों में लगभग प्रत्येक क्षेत्र में ज्ञान का विस्तार हुआ है। इसके परिणाम स्वरूप न केवल विषयों के ज्ञान में वृद्धि हुई है अपितु विभिन्न समवर्गी विषयों को भी बढ़ावा मिला है। यह पत्र विशिष्ट क्षेत्रों में हुई विज्ञान की प्रगति तथा विभिन्न समवर्गी क्षेत्रों में हुई खोजों के बारे में चर्चा करता है। प्राकृतिक चिकित्सा के मूल सिद्धांतों या मूल विचारों में कुछ भी न जोड़े जाने के बावजूद पिछले कुछ दशकों में हुई वैज्ञानिक खोजों के प्रभाव में चिकित्सा पद्धति में परिवर्तन देखे गए हैं।

लेखक ने प्रलेखीकरण की तुलना दूध में से मक्खन निकालने की प्रक्रिया से की है। वास्तव में प्रलेखीकरण सूचनाओं के समुद्र को मथकर उसमें से किसी विषय विशेष के विशिष्ट, उपयुक्त तथा तार्किक ज्ञान का अवगाहन है। यह पत्र प्राकृतिक चिकित्सा की क्षमताओं तथा सीमाओं का आकलन करते हुए इस क्षेत्र में उपयुक्त प्रलेखीकरण की आवश्यकता को रेखांकित करता है। साथ ही भारत में प्राकृतिक चिकित्सा की स्थिति की चर्चा करते हुए उसके योजनाबद्ध विकास के लिए लघु अवधि तथा दूरगामी उद्देश्यों को प्रस्तावित करता है।