Recognition of evidence-based traditional and complementary medicine (TCM) in G20 New Delhi Leaders’ Declaration: Pointers for Homoeopathy

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Abstract
India just wrapped up its G20 presidency role, but not without key commitments for a promising future. It was, indeed, a heartening sight to see all twenty countries of the G20 group together on one platform, united to fight and address various global matters – with the theme ‘वसुधैव कुटुंबक’, meaning ‘One Earth, One Family, One Future’ at the core of all discussions. The comprehensive document, G20 New Delhi Leaders’ Declaration: Strengthening Global Health, and Implementing One Health Approach covers various aspects of global development and stability. Interestingly, under the subject ‘Strengthening Global Health and Implementing One Health Approach’, the strategic document talks of ‘Recognizing the potential role of evidence-based Traditional and Complementary Medicine (TCM) in health, and take note of international efforts in this direction, including WHO’s global and collaborating centres, and clinical trial registries’. This mention bears, in its essence, both the credit to the evidence-based TCM for its potential role in health, as well as a message for this pivotal sector in health – the message for moving further in this regard but not without clinical evidence or collaborations.

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India just wrapped up its G20 presidency role, but not without key commitments for a promising future. It was, indeed, a heartening sight to see all twenty countries of the G20 group together on one platform, united to fight and address various global matters – with the theme ‘जनशीकरण कुटुंबकम’, meaning ‘One Earth, One Family, One Future’ at the core of all discussions. The comprehensive document, G20 New Delhi Leaders’ Declaration: Strengthening Global Health, and Implementing One Health Approach(1) covers various aspects of global development and stability. Interestingly, under the subject ‘Strengthening Global Health and Implementing One Health Approach’, the strategic document talks of ‘Recognizing the potential role of evidence-based Traditional and Complementary Medicine (TCM) in health, and take note of international efforts in this direction, including WHO’s global and collaborating centres, and clinical trial registries’. This mention bears, in its essence, both the credit to the evidence-based TCM for its potential role in health, as well as a message for this pivotal sector in health – the message for moving further in this regard but not without clinical evidence or collaborations.

Generation of evidence in Homoeopathy is what the Homoeopathy doctors have been committed to for long. But apparently, we are working in way too many directions, without realising where must lie our focus – should that be the novelties of findings, replication of results for more validity or simply letting public see the usefulness of Homoeopathy, while we homoeopaths continue to give the best results in our health setups. But with G20 document mentioning the need of clinical trials in TCM, our focus for the next few years must shift back to more clinical trials, which are duly registered.

The six domains of model validity(2) for designing our clinical research protocols with the additional Homoeopathy perspective are highly recommended to make our protocols amenable to internationally acceptable clinical designs, as well as to homoeopathy-specific interpretation of outcomes. In this regard, the Standard Protocol Items: Recommendations for Interventional Trials (SPIRIT) Statement is a useful resource for drafting clinical trial protocols.(3)

Further, in recent times, the clinical trial registration has been seen as a robust solution for transparency in research, and it is the scientific, ethical and moral responsibility of researchers to register all interventional trials prospectively.(4) As per the International Committee of Medical Journal Editors’ clinical trial registration policy, ‘the purpose of clinical trial registration is to prevent selective publication and selective reporting of research outcomes, to prevent unnecessary duplication of research effort, to let patients and the public know what trials are planned or ongoing into which they might want to enrol and to help give ethic review boards considering approval of new studies, a view of the similar work and data relevant to the research they are considering; retrospective registration meets none of these purposes.’(5) Researchers must take into cognizance the fact that the prospective registration of all clinical trials under national or international registries is mandatory for all sorts of clinical research initiatives. Goes without saying then, not having prior registration of the trial also severely limits one’s chances of publishing their work in a reputed journal.

Nevertheless, it is a great time to be a part of the homoeopathy research fraternity, when both the evidence-seekers and critiques for Homoeopathy are trying their best to outdo each other. And if you are a researcher or a science enthusiast, you already know that no scientific growth has ever been witnessed without much resistance. The various forms of evidence that come to us in the form of manuscripts are definitely a motivation for me and my editorial team, and that is perhaps, just a small percentage of scientific efforts going on for proving the worth of Homoeopathy in various parts of the world. Undeterred and committed to bring to the fore evidence-based Homoeopathy, in this issue, we report a randomised controlled trial of individualised homoeopathic medicine versus placebo in managing pain of knee and hip osteoarthritis.(6) The pharmacopeial parameters of Apis mellifica ascertained using pharmacopeial procedures are also reported in this issue.(7) Another study reports the findings of the immunomodulatory effects of homoeopathic medicines, Arsenic album, Rhus toxicodendron, Hepar sulphuris and Bryonia alba on lipopolysaccharide-induced inflammatory response in peripheral blood neutrophils and monocytes.(8)

This issue also features evidence-based case reports showcasing the successful homoeopathic treatment of a variety of dermatological conditions: nodulocystic acne,(9) tinea cruris,(10) warts(11) and mucocele of lower lip.(12) A report of the scientific convention on the World Homoeopathy Day 2023 held in New Delhi on 10th April 2023 is also presented in this issue.(13)

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