

Ayurvedic education in foreign countries

Globalization of Ayurveda

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Ayurveda has attracted the attention of global population specially the developed countries since ages. Foreign travelers were coming to India since centuries in search of knowledge. They were studying Ayurveda along with religion and philosophy at premier Universities like Nalanda, Taxila and Kashi. This is evident from the amalgamation of various Ayurvedic principles and procedures in other traditional system of medicine world over. Religious persons also played major role in propagating Ayurveda in foreign countries. Especially Buddhist religious persons had carried Ayurveda to the Asian countries particularly East Asian countries like Malaysia, Cambodia, Thailand, Myanmar, Japan, Singapore, Korea and Tibet.

After the revival of Ayurveda in India with the independence of the country again Ayurveda started to attract the attention of the general public and medical fraternity world over. The main reason behind this was the holistic approach of Ayurveda, humanitarian approach, simplicity of the procedures, cure of chronic & incurable disease, safer and non-toxic herbal resources. In 1977 at Alma Ata WHO has also stressed for the revival Ayurveda and other TSMs to solve the health care problems of concerned countries.

Up to 1980s propagation of Ayurveda in foreign countries was limited to the level of lectures and personal visits of Vaidyas to deliver lectures and provide treatments, which created inquisitiveness about Ayurveda. Maharshi Mahesh Yogi's university also contributed in creating awareness regarding Ayurveda in foreign countries, however this movement had limitations due to admixture of some other practices and religious followings and exorbitant cost.

Study of Ayurveda in India till this period was having tedious route due to language difficulties, learning was must for study of Ayurveda. After 1980 many Ayurvedic personalities started to visit America, England and other European countries to deliver lectures and some them started to stay there and started personalized teaching system. In this context Yoga personalities have also contributed a lot. Vd. Vasant Lad, Deepak Chopara Robert Svoboda, David Frawley, Acharya Manfred Junius, Ben Hatai, Pt. Shiv Sharma, Dr.P.N.V. Kurup, Vd. Bhagwan Das, Dr.K.N. Udupa, Prof H.S. Sharma have done a great deal in propagation of Ayurveda in the countries of their influence specially America, Japan, Australia, Italy, Germany etc.

Many graduates and post graduates from Jamnagar. BHU and some other colleges have started to visit various countries and set up clinics their. By the 1988 Jamnagar and BHU have opened short courses for foreign Nationals, which further boosted the Ayurvedic influence in foreign countries. Nepal and Sri Lanka also played some role in opening Ayurvedic facilities to foreigners. These two countries were also having one or two Ayurvedic teaching Institutions, now Bangladesh also have a recognized Ayurvedic college conducting 5 year degree course.

The reasons behind the resurgence of interest in Ayurveda in foreign countries can be listed as below:

- Holistic approach as opposed to over specialization
- Importance of individual, its constitution (Prakruti) in planning of individual diet plan.
- Concept of homeostasis as basis of health in Ayurveda

- Importance of sensible life style in harmony with nature, climate and customs.
- Use of natural resources as medicine to which our body system is geared through predisposition.
- Hazardous effect of modern chemical therapeutic agents.
- Deep spiritual thinking of Ayurveda resulting respectful attitude to wards nature and its ecological balance.

For the development of Ayurveda in foreign countries Marc Halpern has suggested in one of his articles that following approach should be adopted step by step so that future problems can be avoided:

- Development of awareness in general population and medical fraternity in particular
- Early informal education of self healing should be started for people so people may try to practice Ayurveda
- Short formal training programs begin as academic schools open with Graduates practice
- Formation of associations to advocate for the profession and open up internal dialogue
- Opening of formal educational programs with lengthy curriculum
- The Government sets up formal scope of practice and licensing of practitioners

Many of the countries other than Asian have already passed the 3rd to 4th stage of this development phenomenon. To name few of them - America, Argentina, Japan, Australia, Netherlands, UK, Italy, South Africa, Germany, Czech Republic, Brazil, New Zealand

America

In America Vd.Vasant Lad, Deepak Chopara, Robert Svobda, David Frawley have created good personalized follower ship and written many books on Ayurveda in English. Three type of training and education program in Ayurveda are available in America:

- Vasant Lad and Ayurvedic Institute of New Mexico offer extensive on site training programs for self-healing without certifying practitioner. Dr. Deepak Chopara runs a shorter seminar program.
- Dr. David Frawley at American Institute runs home study only programs for Vedic Studies in New Mexico and Robert Svoboda via the Ayurvedic Institute in New Mexico. Florida Vedic College, the Massachusetts and the Ayurveda Holistic Center in New York offer home study plus minimal classroom training (Usually two weeks per year) culminating in certification as a practitioner.
- Only formal and elaborate training program in Ayurveda is being offered by the California College of Ayurveda. The California college of Ayurveda was founded in 1995. The training of Ayurvedic practitioners was started with title Clinical Ayurvedic specialist. In 1996 the State of California formally approved the college as a vocational training institution in the field of Ayurveda. Its curriculum offers 500hour Ayurvedic study spread over two years. Curriculum also includes six months of supervised internship. Classes are held at three locations Grass Valley, Oakland and Seal Beach. In America two associations i.e. National Ayurvedic Medical Association and California Association of Ayurvedic medicine have been formed which trying to get recognition and accreditation to Ayurveda.

The states of California, Florida, New Mexico and New York have approved the teaching of Ayurveda at tertiary level. Recently many institutions and associations were formed for Ayurvedic training and practices. Many graduates and post graduate of Ayurveda arrived in USA and trying to establish Ayurvedic teaching and treatment centers. Few of them are named below:

AAAM – Dr.Srikant Mishra and Dr. R.C. Pandey and their friends have formed American Academy of Ayurvedic Medicine, which is still in its very early stage.

American Institute of Vedic Studies- David Frawley

New England Institute of Ayurvedic Medicine- Qutub Abbas

Saraswati Mandiram Trust Vivekanand Ayurveda College- Ramadhin Ramaswamy

Vedic College of Florida- Randey Stein

Argentina

In the Medical school of State University of Buenos Aires a Post Graduate Diploma course has been started and Dr. Jorge Luis Berra has been appointed Director for the Post Graduate degree course in Ayurvedic Medicine in the year 2000. these courses are offered to qualified doctors and paramedical professionals. Courses are offered through Foundation de Salud Ayurveda Prema.

Dr. Sergio Lais-Suarez is offering his one-year course (240 Hours) exclusively to medical doctors through his institution named as Department de Medicina Ayurveda, Universidad Abierta Ineramericana at Chacabuco since 1997. Dr. Sergio has more than 20 years experience in Ayurveda and yoga. He also runs a health spa where Panchakarma massage is also being offered. A visiting faculty from India supports his Institute.

Australia

An International congress of traditional Asian medicine (ICTAM) held in 1979 at Canberra where Dr Krishna Kumar and Acharya Junius were present attracted the attention of many towards Ayurveda. Shortly after this congress the Australian School of Ayurveda in Adelaide was founded with the help of experts from Indian Universities.

Later in 1994 Institution developed into the Australasian Academy of Natural Medicine. This institution with recognized Ayurvedic faculty was to gain full accreditation in Australia. It offers Diploma (either Ayurveda or Naturopathy) after four years of training plus clinical practice. Its competency based standard training comes under the vocational Education and training Authorities. This institute becomes eligible for financial help to the students and student visa for overseas students

Bangladesh

Before independence of India there were few Ayurvedic colleges in existence at present Bangladesh. However after Bangladesh became a separate country Ayurvedic teaching is getting shape day by day. A full fledged 5 ½ yr degree course is being conducted at Government Unani & Ayurvedic degree college, Dhaka. They have adopted nearly the same syllabus offered by CCIM. This college is affiliated to University of Dhaka.

Brazil

Arjuna Das a Yoga therapist is conducting few Ayurvedic courses in Brazil. Brazilian Government has shown its interest in cultivation of the herbal medicines utilized as Ayurvedic medicines.

Czech Republic:

Dr. George Essay a Keralite was working in the field of Ayurveda for 20 years. In 1997 he moved to Prague and he founded his Ayurvedic Center in Eastern and Central Europe in 1998. Later he established institution named "Astanga Ayurved" where he conducts two short term courses for general public namely- Fundamentals of Ayurvedic Medicine and Ayurvedic Nutrition and Diet Therapy.

Another institution has been established by Dr. Govind Rajpoot in Prague in 1994 viz "Ayurvedic Institute of Dhanvantari". This institution runs a Three year diploma course of Ayurveda with specialization in Panchakarma. They also conduct Summer camps of 21 days for health care through Ayurveda and Yoga. They have certain publications of Ayurveda in czech language. They are supported by the faculty basically derived from yoga institutes.

Germany

Germany is country where Ayurveda along with other Vedic sciences is having good foot hold. Many persons are working for propagation of Ayurveda in this country. Ayurvedic Physicians from India are regularly visiting to deliver lectures, seminar and consultations. Many German doctors and other persons have studied Ayurveda in Jamnagar and other places at India. Many German Doctors and Health practitioners are using Ayurvedic formulations and massage techniques in their practice. However till date no serious teaching Institution could take shape. One Pharmaceutical venture Natura Farma GMBH is trying to start some short of courses for Doctors on regular basis.

Greece

Dr. Kostopoulos has set up a college named as “Holistic Health Foundation” in Athens. He is a staunch follower of Ayurveda and studied Ayurveda with Dr. Barot.

Hungary

In Hungary Ayurveda has become an official and accepted medical system and is an obligatory subject for a post graduate degree course since 1997. A Hungarian establishment “Ayurveda Medical Foundation” is working for the propagation of Ayurveda in Hungary; however it seems that they are only in the second stage of development.

Israel

Reidmann International College of Complimentary medicine established in 1987 is going to establish a four year teaching programme in Ayurvedic medicine in TelAviv. At present this college is conducting classes of Naturopathy, Natural Health Therapies, Massage courses and Natural Clinical Nutrition. They are planning to conduct short courses of 3-4 weeks.

Italy

Italy is one country which attracted lot of interest in Ayurveda and Yoga many eminent personalities from India like Vd. Bhagawan Das, Prof R.H. Singh, Dr. Subhas Ranade etc are visiting Italy regularly to deliver lectures, attend seminars and to conduct short term courses. Mr. Fabio Corigliani has established Instituto Italiano De Ayurveda at Ferenze and conducts three years course of Ayurvedic Medicine extending up to 400 lectures. They also offer an advance course in Ayurveda which also covers the teaching of classical text books also.

Many others have also started Institutions and centers for Ayurveda however it seems that they are still in their infancy. To quote few S.K.A. Ayurveda Cultural Association at Pozzuolo, Martesana,

Japan

In Japan the study, research and spread of Ayurveda is being carried out for last 30 years. Prof Hiroshi Maruyama of Osaka medical school has established Society of Ayurveda in Japan in1969. Since then various program like seminar etc were organized for the propagation of Ayurveda. Many delegations from India including

contemporary Ayurvedic personalities have visited Japan, which gave good boost to the popularity of Ayurveda in Japan.

The Institute of Traditional Oriental Medicine in Tokyo was established in 1994 by the joint effort of Ben Hatai, U.K.Krishna and Uebaba Kazuo. This Institute is conducting short-term course for health professional, which contains 50 hours of theoretical teaching and 50 hours of practical training. A special course in Panchakarma is also being offered to general public. A quarterly periodical named “Shanti Marga” is being published since inception. Many books have already been translated in Japanese and published.

Prof H.S. Sharma and his wife Hiroe Inamura have also contributed in propagation of Ayurveda in Japan.

Dr. Harishanker Sharma and Dr. Inamura Hiroe has established a new institution “Aihore Pratisthanam” and “Osaka Ayurveda Kenkyusho” in 1987. They have also translated few ayurvedic classics in Japanese language. They are conducting short term primary course of 54 hours and advance course of 91 hours. They have also a course of Bhava Prakasha to study Ayurved and Sanskrit together. Founders of college are well qualified in Ayurveda and college is also supported by a qualified faculty from India.

Mauritius

In Mauritius Ayurvedic Clinic is running under the Government protection and by a NGO. Few students from Mauritius have been sent by the Government to study Ayurveda in India. They are doing their post graduation in Ayurveda at Jamnagar and Varanasi. However no academic institutions could be established at this country.

Nepal

In Nepal Ayurvedic teaching was going on since long but the course was of 3year duration. Now a full-fledged degree course is being conducted at Institute of Medicine in the premises of Tribhuvan University, Kathmandu.

Netherlands

Dr. A.K. Mehta an Ayurvedic graduate from Haryana was visiting this country since 1980's and organizing lectures, courses and workshops in this country. He was a pioneer in the field of Ayurveda in the Benelux countries and has 8 practices through out Netherlands and Belgium. He has established European Institute for Scientific Research on Ayurveda (EISRA) in 1989 and started organize 2-year technical and 4-year academic level degree program since early 90's. This Institute is well supported by the faculty comprised of various graduates and postgraduates of Ayurveda from India visiting regularly. They have also formed a Professional association called “Associatie Ayurveda Nederland”. This Institution has published many books in Dutch prepared by its faculty.

New Zealand

Dr. Phillip Cottingham established the “Wellpark College of Natural Therapies” in 1990 in Auckland. This college conducts various courses in Ayurveda, Natural Therapies and Yoga. They conduct a Certificate course in Ayurvedic Life style counselling, extending to total 840 hours. Another course of

3 year Diploma in Ayurved Medicine is also being conducted. This college is recognized by New Zealand Government. This college is supported by an Ayurvedic faculty including Dr. Ajit from India.

Russia

In Russia also lot of interest has been generated about Ayurveda and yoga. NAAMI medical center, Moscow is engaged in propagation of Ayurveda in Russia since last six years. They have invited a team of vaidyas from India and opened up an Ayurvedic clinic in Moscow, which was a good success and generated good awareness for Ayurveda. The translation of Charaka, Sushruta and Vagbhat are being carried out in Russian. Govt. of India has signed a MOU with NAAMI in June 1999 under which all support is being provided by the Govt. of India for the development of Ayurveda in Russia. The Russian Govt. has conveyed that they have recognized Panchakarma as line of treatment throughout the country and the process for recognition of Kshara Sutra treatment has also commenced. Many Physicians are visiting Russia to train their physicians in various practices of Ayurveda. Russian delegations are visiting Jamnagar & Varanasi for training. Students of Institute of Medico-Socio Rehabilitology are being taught Ayurveda by Dr. Agnivesh and his team. At present Ayurveda teaching starts from second year and runs up to the completion of the course.

South Africa

A large presence of Indians in this country made Ayurveda popular. However it took long persistent battle by Dr. Govinder his other Ayurvedic qualified friends to Ayurveda recognized as an alternative system of medicine. South Africa today allows the importing of Ayurvedic medicine to this country. Ayurvedic practice is also recognized and has representation on different Boards of the South African Ayurvedic Liaison Committee and African Allied Health Professional Act.

Now a full-fledged degree course in Ayurveda has been started at the Nelson Mandel school of Medicine at Ayurvedic faculty of natal University.

Sri Lanka

Ayurvedic tradition in Sri Lanka is centuries old but the teaching Institutions were established nearly 70 years back by the persons educated from India. At present two institutions are engaged in Ayurvedic teaching:

- Institute of Indigenous Medicine (IIM), Colombo University, Rajgiriya
- Gampaha Wickramarachchi Ayurveda Institute (GWAI), Kelonia University

Previously these Institutions were awarding diploma in Ayurveda since 1980s IIM has started to award the degree of BAMS since few years GWAI has also started to award the degree under the Kelania University. Many of Sri Lankan graduates have attained Post Graduate Degrees from Jamnagar and Varanasi hence this country has sufficient highly qualified faculty for teaching Ayurveda at their country.

Though Sri Lanka Institutions and Govt. does not have official connection with CCIM however they follow the rules, requirements and syllabus as practiced in India. In Sri Lanka there is no accrediting body at present however there is proposal for the same.

U.K.

The Ayurvedic Co of Great Britain (1989) has established a college named "Ayurvedic College of Great Britain". They are conducting BA (Hons) in Ayurvedic studies under the auspices of Thames Valley University, London extending to three years. This college is managed by Mr. Gopi Warriar and Srikala Warriar.

Dr. Marouf Athique and his colleagues have also established the college of Ayurveda (U.K.) which is offering a BA degree course in Ayurveda.

From the above details it is evident that the countries like Sri Lanka, Nepal and Bangladesh are in first group where Ayurveda has good foot hold and conducting 5 year degree courses. Some of them are also recognized by CCIM. In second group are countries like America, Australia, Netherlands, Japan, Argentina and Italy as they have some form of recognized qualifications and their graduates have some sort of recognition for their clinical practices. Among the third group of institutions of countries like New Zealand, Germany, Hungary, Russia, UK, Czech Rep, Brazil can be kept where teaching institutions are taking shape.

One thing can be noticed that except few institutions most of them do not have the institutionally qualified Ayurvedic graduates and post graduates as faculty. Hence it is very necessary that these institutions should employ institutionally qualified Ayurvedic teachers who not expel *Ama* by *Shodhan* therapy. Neither they perform *marma puncture* therapy. But at the same time Ayurvedic post graduates require special orientation in the teaching techniques and habit and habitat of foreign nations along with their expectations from Ayurveda.

I thank all the authors whose articles have been referred in preparing this article. Most of this information has been collected from the souvenir published by Gujarat Ayurved University during First and Second International Seminars held in Jan 2000 & 01.