

Editor Speak

Dear Readers,

Are we doing research in Homeopathy to satisfy our allopathic counterparts?. This was a question raised during an important scientific forum recently. The comment was based on the trend to bring out scientific evidences adopting protocols designed in biomedicine. Double blind studies, cross over studies, measuring statistical significance etc may be essential in a scientific investigation, but do these protocols suit on every homeopathy study. This is relevant especially when the system is faced with credibility check in spite of its therapeutic merit and massive clinical evidence. The medical research could be broadly categorised as clinical and fundamental. It could be diseases based, patient based, drug based etc; and also be on curative care, preventive care or on promtive health. Clinical research is meant for better evidences on safety of the medicine and its effectiveness.

Let us take the clinical research being conducted today. The biomedicine based on Cartesian philosophy of dualism considers the mind and body as two distinct entities. This does not give scope to co-relate the changes in emotions, feelings, understanding or will to the physical ailments. A patient of typhoid, whether he is thirty or not, whether he prefers covering or uncovering, restless or calm is quite insignificant in biomedicine to understand the patient or for making prescription. The thrust given there is mainly on changes in bio- chemical parameters, evidenced through laboratory reports. Whereas Homoeopathy based on *vitalistic* philosophy, give significant importance on the emotion, feelings, understanding etc. to know the patient as also for prescription. Here, there is a definite co-relation with mind and body. That is why homoeopathy is considered *holistic*. (*Vitalism as seen by Homeopathy is totally different from the* Ontology *taught in theology.)* In Homeopathy, the bio chemical parameters are used for a nosological data, evaluating the prognosis or for general management of the patient; certainly less relevant for prescription. Homeopathy is a science and an art of medicine. Hahnemann codified the system based on a core concept "similia similibus curantur." He fortified this with supporting principles of drug proving, potentisation and individualisation. He further strengthened this with ancillary theories of chronic diseases (Miasm), vital force (vital principle) and minimum dose. No honest effort has ever been made to understand as to which of the above are science and what otherwise are art. Thus, in the pursuit of bringing scientific evidences, there is a blind race to investigate each and every of the concept, principle or theories with the same yardstick of modern science.

The biomedicine is based purely on experimental evidences and Homeopathy based on vitalistic concept is partly based on experimental science and partly based experienced evidences. As the treatment based on biomedicine and homeopathy is different, the clinical research to create evidence on effectiveness should also be different.

The present paradigm of imitating clinical research to bring evidences to satisfy the allopathic counterparts in system like homoeopathy is, therefore, irrational. Apart from this, even the biomedicine is questioning the merit of double blind studies or Meta analysis based on non identical sampling. One possible alternate research model in Homeopathy could be treatment based validation or Likelihood ratio studies that could substantiate better evidences.

Coming to fundamental research, the supporting principles postulated by Hahnemann such as potentisation,

drug proving and to an extent individualisation are the scientific basis of Homeopathy. These can be demonstrated with experimental science. Individualisation in Homeopathy is now gaining acceptance as personalised medicine or *theranostics*. Genetic concepts are used to theorise it. Ultra high dilutions used Homeopathy through potentisation is getting validation with nano-pharmacology (it may need more research and standardisation). Drug proving is demonstrable with existing scientific protocols as a hard science. Such experimental evidences shall encapsulate the *similia* principle as a science based medicine. These are the areas of fundamental research, certainly lot more cutting edge research is needed urgently to bring Homeopathy as the refined medical science.

Theory of chronic diseases (miasm), vital force and minimum dose are ancillary to the core concept of *Similia*. Even amongst hard core practitioners and teachers in Homeopathy, there are diverse views on its validity and application. We may leave these for the time being to remain as it is or efforts may be made to validate through experience based evidences. Let the efforts in research be to understand Homeopathy better, rather than for convincing someone who do not want to see the truth of holistic care.

Dr. Eswara Das
Editor