

Editor Speak

Dear Readers,

ENRICHING HOMEOPATHIC EDUCATION AND PRACTICE

Specialisation in medicine helps the Physician to explore the depth of the disease condition on the specified organ or disease. This also facilitates him to adopt targeted therapeutics, intervention or technique for its rational management. Broadly the medical specialisations are Internal Medicine and Surgery. For convenience, these are further branched, based on the age the of patient namely paediatrics and geriatrics; organ or technique-based like respiratory, cardiology; diagnostics based as radiology, pathology or therapeutic based like rheumatology, endocrinology etc. To some extent, practitioners have been practicing medicine in different dedicated ways. Even in antiquity medical specialization was known in Indian, Greek as well Egyptian medicines. In late 18th century, Francastro's Germ theory on causation of diseases got wider acceptance after path breaking contributions by Louis Pasteur and Robert Koch. The discovery of Penicillin as an antibiotic for bacterial infections by Alexander Fleming led to the birth of Biomedicine. With a blind race to see health, diseases and cure through the prism of experimental biology and pharmacology that emerged in late 1950s gave a blow to the experienced medicine. Adaptation of the Cartesian principle of duality, identifying the immaterial mind and the material body as two distinct entities in their medical approach put an end to the Hippocratic tradition of holistic care of the sick in Biomedicine. Accelerated demand for targeted therapeutic tools or interventions contributed for further multiplication in the broad specialised areas of Internal Medicine and Surgery, considering every system of the body, organ or part as self-regulating sovereign entity. Such an assortment of medical specialities have become arbitrary and varies even from country to country. Recently there is a trend to make interdisciplinary specialisations to have comprehensive treatment approaches. One example, the Paediatrics have further branched to Paediatric Anaesthesiology, Paediatric Cardiology, Paediatric Critical Care Medicine, Paediatric Emergency Medicine, Paediatric Endocrinology, Paediatric Gastroenterology, Paediatric Haematology-Oncology, Paediatric Infectious Diseases, Paediatric Nephrology, Paediatric Orthopaedics Paediatric Otolaryngology Paediatric Pathology, Paediatric Radiology, Paediatric Rheumatology, Paediatric Sports Medicine Paediatric Surgery Paediatric Transplant Hepatology, Paediatric Urology etc.

Experts in Artificial Intelligence (AI) propound that technology would replace eighty percent of doctors in the future because machines will be more accurate, objective and cheaper than an average doctor. If this is true we may not need doctors at all eventually. Though the specialisation and super-specialisations have contributed innovation in diagnostics and treatment, the general criticism is that in most of the cases the specialisation has done more havoc in the health care system. AI may reduce the trouble on repetitive and monotonous routine jobs faster and cheaper and shall provide better results in health care support system like diagnostics.

Patient care is not a linear process where an input leads inevitably to the desired result. There is a bigger need for the creativity and unique problem-solving skills of doctors especially in Internal Medicine. No digital health device or software can replace such skills. The science of medicine giving way to technological innovations based AI shall have serious consequences in the practice of holistic and artistic health care.

The biomedical approach to see the sick as disconnected units of a living organism has given way to seeing the human organs and cells independent entities and directs to treat only the effect of the diseases. In contrast, in homeopathy, by and large, such compartmentalized treatment do not exit

Homeopathy is a medical specialisation in several countries where medically qualified doctors undertake extra study on the principles and practice of Homeopathy. Generally there is a perception that in Homeopathy specialisation is not necessary. Homeopathy is a holistic system, where the sick is seen as a unified entity with a deranged life force. It does not matter, whether the liver or the skin is affected, the approach to the patient and understanding the evolutionary process of disease taking into the totality of his physical and mental symptoms, signs, living conditions; habits; the narration by the family and friends; past and family histories; his miasmatic, constitutional, temperamental peculiarities,; physical examination correlated with laboratory findings make the total picture of the derangement of health. The proponents who do not encourage specialisation in Homeopathy may be right to the extent that every patient is assessed holistically considering the derangement in the sensations and functions of the organ and system irrespective whether affected or not. In ideal situations where the Physician is so talented to understand all the diseases and all the approaches to restore the sick to health, this perception may be good. Keeping the limitations of the physician, scope of curing every diseases and to keep the Hahnemannian teachings to provide everything possible to alleviate the suffering of the sick, specialisation on certain areas of health care shall enable the physician to gain deeper knowledge on diseases, select better therapeutic modalities and overall management of the case. To that extent specialisation on areas where Homeopathy has added strength in health care need to be explored. The potential areas are Dermatology, Endocrinology, Rheumatology, Geriatrics, Allergic disorders, Infertility, psycho-somatic conditions etc.

It would be better that the Postgraduates in Homeopathy may be encouraged to Senior Residency Scheme, They shall work on the identified clinical speciality for three years. This shall lead to PhD, if the candidate gets registered for the PhD programme of any University. Such well trained and experienced candidates may be appointed as teachers or researchers in their speciality, where ever possible. This will facilitate well trained man power in teaching and research and enrich the Homeopathy.

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