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ANALYSIS OF DEMOGRAPHIC COMPOSITION OF PATIENTS SEEKING HOMEOPATHIC TREATMENT IN SANTINIKETAN, INDIA

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ABSTRACT:

(a) Objective:

- To study the demographic pattern and characteristics of homeopathic patients under study
- To find out the age and sex specific diseases treated in homeopathy
- To find out the significance of subjective and objective symptoms for drug selection.

(b) Methods used:

The study has been carried out by observations of clinics over a period of two years. Age-sex compositions of the patients have been prepared with the help of data collected. Intensive observation of treatment to analyse subjective and objective symptoms.

(c) Conclusion:

The interesting outcomes are:

- As a whole, there is a large difference between the proportion of male and female patients seeking homeopathic treatment under study.
- Most of the patients visit with chronic diseases irrespective of age and sex.
- The proportion of female patients in the age group of 15-49 accounts as high as 40%. A large proportion of this age group visit clinics with the subjective symptoms of pain in different parts of body and of female diseases.

- iv. A marked decrease in the proportion of patients from the age group 70-74 to upper levels.

(d) Significance of study:

The paper has two different aspects of study. First one is to study the demographic pattern and characteristics of the homeopathic patients under study. The second one is analysis of subjective and objective symptoms, how those symptoms are able to find out the correct drug.

KEY WORDS: Age-sex composition, patient, subjective symptom, objective symptom.

INTRODUCTION:

Demographics are the study of a population based on factors such as age, race and sex. Demographic data refers to socio-economic information expressed statistically also including employment, education, income, marriage rates, birth and death rates and more factors (www.investopedia.com). Demographics are the classifiable characteristics of a given population. Demographic characteristics most commonly used in public health statistics includes – age, gender, race, ethnicity, geographic area, educational attainment, income level (KaziangaH, Mc.Millan M. S,et.al 2014).

Analysis of public health data by demographic characteristics is essential to the reduction and elimination of health disparities(Yadav S., Bilas R. 2017). The Minority Health and Health Disparities Research and Education Act of 2000 described health disparities as differences in the overall rate of disease incidence, prevalence, morbidity, mortality of survival rates in the population of compared to the health status of the general population (Giray C.,Gail M,et.al,2018).

Analysis by demographic characteristics also shows at what age certain diseases and conditions typically affect persons as well as how

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life, events, choices and circumstances affect health outcomes (Aeran A., Kumar R., 2015).

Certain demographic groups have consistently better outcomes than others on a variety of public health issues. It is important how the age-distribution of population would be taken regarding the analysis of health of patient (Person LA August 2018). It will be justified if taken as below –

- Percentage of patients more than 60 years
- Percentage of patients 15 to 59 years
- Children 0 to 4 years

To explore the pattern of homeopathic treatment one should put emphasis on the subjective & objective symptoms those are dealt by the homeopaths. Subjective symptom those explained by the patient, which are not properly or fully explained.

The art of treatment is to put emphasis on objective symptoms, objective symptoms are those observed by the physicians. During examination of the patient, the physician may also elicit certain objective assessments of the patient and these are called signs. Therefore, homeopath studies the signs and symptoms of the patient very carefully to understand the internal derangement of the patient (Binayak R. , D., SharadhaS.O. et.al 2015).

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

Following the rule of age- sex composition, the table show how the ratio of patients varies with age and sex.

Age (years)	Male (%)	Female (%)
0 – 4	5	2
5 – 9	4	3
10 – 14	2	4
15 – 19	2	6
20 – 24	1	2
25 – 29	3	5
30 – 39	3	7
40 – 44	3	1

45 – 49	1	3
50 – 54	2	8
55 – 59	1	2
60 – 64	4	4
64 – 69	2	1
70 – 74	1	2
75 – 79	1	1
80+	1	2
TOTAL	41	59

Table: 1, Data Source: Primary, Year: 2019

The table no.1 shows that the proportion of female patients is 18% more than male patients in total. The total proportion of child patients in the age group of 0-4 years patient is only 7% (male owns 5% and female 2%). On the other hand, patients 60+years account 10%, male and female are equal in proportion. Interestingly, the working group of patient is 71%, of which male accounts 21% and female 40%.

Let us focus on the type subjective symptoms of patients in each age and sex groups. The significant diseases of child group (0-4yrs of age) are common cough and cold, diarrhoea asthma (KhanMohd. Hroon,. Das S.et.al 2014). The subjective symptoms in case of common cough and cold is explained by the patient as, throat pain after taking cold food (GillN.K., Singh A.,et.al 2016).The physician observes that her voice creaks while talking and prescribes Causticum 200. A 4- year old boy caught cold came to physician with nose blockage, the physician asks whether saliva comes during sleep, and if there is any throat pain or not, his mother replies that saliva comes sometimes and he does not have any throat pain. He was given Calc. Curb 30 potency. In case of a 3 year old girl who came clinic with subjective symptoms like cough, running nose and sneezing. The doctor searches objective symptoms asking about stool, thirst and whether developed any itching on body. Her mother replied that the stool is black in colour,

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strong thirst, does not have itching. After considering these objective symptoms she was prescribed Thuja 200 and Bryonia 30.

The above discussion depicts the significance of objective symptoms. In three cases, subjective symptoms appear more or less same, but the objective symptoms are different, that is why the medicines are different in three cases.

The significant diseases both chronic and acute need mentioning in the male age group between 15 to 59 years are metabolism problem, different types of skin diseases, diabetes, heart diseases, brain related diseases (Gedam D., Ambade G.et.al 2015). On the other hand, a large proportion females of this age (15 to 59 years) come for homeopathic treatment for female diseases also(Sharma A. K., Bansal A.2017), in second rank comes pain in any part of body as subjective symptom. Other subjective symptoms are problems in glands, which include thyroid, schistose in uterus and breast (Federico, Gutierrez H., Sep 2014).

The patients in the age group of 60+ describe the subjective symptoms irrespective of sex, about problems in vision (glaucoma or others), problems of nervous system, insomnia, loss of urine control, urine comes in drops (prostate gland problem for male), heart blockage, brain stroke, post operation complications, hernia, piles etc.

Some symptoms / diseases are irrespective of age and sex like cancer, mental problems, fatty liver, stone in gall bladder or kidney and many diseases (Peiro A., April 2006).

The success of clinical homeopathy is dependent on objective symptoms those enable drug selection. This could done by the physicians asking some questions to the patients. Thus, the physician asks some common some uncommon questions. More over emphasis is given by minute observations from time of entering to leaving the clinic. One example of objective symptom is – the patient complains about itching on hands. The

doctor first examines the body part which appears in red dots with swelling (Gooch E.2017). Then he asks about the right kind of sensation after scratching, whether the sensation aggravates / relieve in hot or cold. The physician took the history. This 25 yr. old female patient had headache 3-4 years back, 1 to ½ yr. back breathing trouble appeared. The physician prescribed 6 doses Calc. Sulph(200)

RESULTS:

1. Male Female ratio shows a marked difference (41:59). Very high proportion of female patients within the age group of 15-59 yrs.
2. Some diseases are age, sex specific and some are not (Yakhmi S., Sing Sidhu B et.al 2014).

DISCUSSION:

The age structure of a given country or region may be analyzed on the basis age groups. On the basis of physiological and economic activities, the population is generally classified into three groups (i) the young (ii) the adults & (iii) the old. There are no standardized break points. That is why for intensive study, the age groups are classed in various ways. In case of age sex composition study the data is spatial one, where as in this study it is rather temporal. Data have been collected for two years over 500 patients.

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