



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE AND MANAGEMENT

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HERBAL RENAISSANCE IN INDIA & THE ROLE OF ISKCON IN ITS SUCCESS
(WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MAYAPUR, VRINDAVAN, BANGALORE & DELHI ISKCON CENTRES)

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ABSTRACT

The present study is based on the herbal renaissance in India and the role of ISKCON in its success. ISKCON is a popular religious movement of the twentieth century which is chiefly concerned with the spread of the teachings of Lord Krishna. The devotees of ISKCON lead a simple life and observe the rules of discipline. It keeps its devotees in an organised way through discipline, sanctity and the programmes of Krishna Consciousness. It teaches its devotees the value and importance of ayurved and herbal treatment, and motivates them to undergo only ayurved and herbal treatment. The botanical gardens, green-surroundings, basil-plants at places, cow-worship and the use of cow-milk, gau-mootra for medicinal purposes etc, are some of the things in ISKCON that speak of the devotees'love of ayurved and herbs. The spiritual environment, the meditation and their undergoing yoga exercises reveal their love of yoga. All the religions teach their followers the importance and value of ayurved and herbal treatment, but it is only the Hindu religion that chiefly values them. Some of the sages, saints and scholars that are playing their role in bringing the people of the world closer to the ayurved and herbs are- Swami Ramdev, Acharya Balkrishna and Kripaluji Maharaj. ISKCON is playing an immense role in making the herbal renaissance successful by growing herbal plants in its gardens, having ayurvedic aushdhalayas and by motivating its devotees to undergo yoga and spiritual meditation. It is found that Ayurved is much better than Alopahy, and that Ayurved can cure every disease.

KEYWORDS

ISKCON, Herbal, Lord Krishna.

INTRODUCTION

Ancient India has ever been a land of sages, saints and seers as well as a land of scholars and scientists. Ancient India's contribution to science and technology include Mathematics, Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, Medical science & surgery, Fine Arts, Mechanical & production technology, Civil engineering & architecture, Shipbuilding & navigation and cure of diseases through herbal medicines. Ayurveda traces its origin to the Vedas, *Atharvaveda* in particular, and is connected to Hindu religion. *Atharvaveda* (one of the four most ancient books of Indian knowledge, wisdom and culture) contains 114 hymns or formulations for the treatment of diseases. Ayurveda originated in and developed from these hymns. In this sense, ayurveda is considered by some to have divine origin. Indian medicine has a long history, and is one of the oldest organised systems of medicine. Its earliest concepts are set out in the sacred writings called the Vedas, especially in the metrical passages of the *Atharvaveda*, which may possibly date as far back as the 2nd millennium BC. According to a later writer, the system of medicine was received by a man named Dhanvantari from Brahma, and Dhanvantari was deified as the god of medicine. In later times his status was gradually reduced, until he was credited with having been an earthly king. The *Sushruta Samhita* of Sushruta appeared during the 1st millennium BC Dwivedi & Dwivedi (2007) – on the work of the surgeon Sushruta – write:"The main vehicle of the transmission of knowledge during that period was by oral method. The language used was Sanskrit – the vedic language of that period (2000–500 BC). The most authentic compilation of his teachings and work is presently available in a treatise called *Sushruta Samhita*. This contains 184 chapters and description of 1,120 illnesses, 700 medicinal plants, 64 preparations from mineral sources and 57 preparations based on animal sources."

The glorious heritage of India has been shaped and fostered from the Vedic and Upanishadic times. The Vedas are the earliest poetry and prose of humanity. The Upanishads have been described as the epic poems of self-knowledge, world-knowledge and God-knowledge. The vast galaxy of seer-scientists, philosopher-poets, savants and sages and the divine incarnations that traversed the paths of temporal knowledge-Apara Vidya and spiritual knowledge-Para Vidya have molded the Indian psyche and spiritual paths and left behind a rich and full history of thought that ranged from science, philosophy, religion and the living arts of man. They blossomed in an environment of respect and freedom of thought and expression and scientific inquiry. No new system of philosophy or spiritual knowledge came about or flourished unless the founder of the new system was thoroughly familiar and had carefully examined all the existing previous philosophies. Thus, the six systems of Indian philosophy-viz. Nyaya, Vaisesika, Sankhya, Jaina, Buddhist, Vedanta-dwaita and advaita-dualistic and non-dualistic systems developed a mutual harmony, and amity, wholesomeness and integrity in their core.

Ayurveda is a traditional system of Indian medicine. It is attributed to Dhanvantari, the physician to the gods in Hindu mythology, who received it from Brahma. Its earliest concepts were set out in the portion of the Vedas known as the *Atharvaveda* (c. 2nd millennium BC). The most important Ayurvedic texts are the *Caraka samhita* and *Susruta samhita* (1st–4th century AD). These texts analyze the human body in terms of earth, water, fire, air, and ether as well as the three bodily humours (wind, bile, and phlegm). To prevent illness, Ayurvedic medicine emphasizes hygiene, exercise, herbal preparations, and yoga. To cure ailments, it relies on herbal medicines, physiotherapy, and diet. Ayurvedic medicine is still a popular form of health care in India, where it is taught in roughly 100 colleges, and it has gained currency in the West as a form of alternative medicine. People around the world are increasingly working with their own bodies to restore balance. They're using medicinals found in nature to avoid the side effects of antibiotics and turning to traditions that have passed the test of time. The oldest medical system of all is Ayurveda, which dates back 5,000 years to its origins in India. In *The Chopra Center Herbal Handbook*, Deepak Chopra, M.D., and David Simon, M.D., draw on the forty most important herbs of Ayurveda, from aloe and amrit to ginger and winter cherry, to create a practical, popular reference book that shows how to strengthen immunity, rejuvenate the body, boost energy, and detoxify the system. It is the nature of life to strive continually for more evolutionary solutions to the endless challenges that arise. In this information age, every intelligent person has access to a vast body of facts and opinions on any subject of interest. People facing health concerns no longer depend solely upon their physicians for advice and information on the management of their illness. Whether or not you have a healthcare background, you have unprecedented opportunities to learn about your problem. Through the Internet, books, journals, newsletters, and support groups, more and more people are formulating their own view of their illness and how they want to approach it. Patients are no longer passive and are not inclined to be as patient as they once were. There is a powerful movement of self-empowerment and consumerism in the world today.

HERBAL RENAISSANCE IN INDIA

The term 'herbal renaissance' means 'the revival or rebirth of the use of the herbs'. It means that once there were times in India when the people had a strong inclination to the herbs and to the cure of their diseases through the herbal treatment, and that due to the introduction of allopathy the people started showing indifference to the herbal treatment. However, now there can be seen all over India the herbal renaissance which is forcing to brood over the medicinal use of the various herbs available in India. At present there are several botanists, sages, saints and social reformers who are making efforts to make everyone a part of the herbal renaissance. Obviously, the most leading name in the field is Baba Ramdev who has healed the diseases of thousands of the people all over the world. He is playing a dominant role in making the people familiar with the various herbs. He along with another spiritualist and scholar of Ayurved, Acharya Shri Balkrishna is making the herbal renaissance more and more popular day by day. In the context of India both of them claim to be called the pioneers of the herbal renaissance. Swami Ramdev is desirous of seeing no patient of any disease, and therefore, he has developed Divya Pharmacy in Haridwar where pure medicines for obesity, diabetes mellitus, high blood pressure, acne vulgaris, leucoderma, oligospermia and sexual disorder, tumour, gastric problems, mucous in stool, sprue and diarrhoea, acidity, coronary artery diseases, migraine pain, headache, depression, joint pain, gout, cervical spondylitis, sinus, asthma, cancer, fibroid uterus, hepatitis A,B,C, hernia, epilepsy, cataract, glaucoma, infertility, constipation, etc. are manufactured for sale. Divya Yog Mandir (Trust), started "Brahmakalp Chikitsalaya" at Kripalu Bagh Ashram, Kankhal in 1995 where patients suffering from various diseases were cured using Ayurvedic medicines and practices of Yoga. Need was felt to provide quality Ayurvedic medicines to the patients to seek optimum results as results of Ayurvedic treatment are directly proportional to the quality of prepared medicines. Hence a small scale manufacturing unit of Ayurvedic medicines was established in the campus of Kripalu Bagh Ashram, Kankhal. This was the beginning of Divya Aushadhi Nirmanshala (Divya Pharmacy), which was totally based on traditional methods. Divya Pharmacy has had the exalted vision to bring Ayurveda to society in a contemporary form and to unravel the mystery behind this haloed and revered, Indian system of medicine by exploring and selecting indigenous herbs, ancient Ayurvedic literatures and subjecting the formulations to modern pharmacological, toxicological safety tests and clinical trials to create new drugs and therapies. Divya Pharmacy tries that medicines should possibly be available to common man at the minimum cost price. In the year 2002-03, modernization of the pharmacy has been done. A new expanded unit of the pharmacy has been established well equipped with machines based on modern techniques. At present 285 herbal products are manufactured at the Divya Pharmacy which are used by the people all over the world. They are- kwath, asawa, vati, churna, guggul, bhasm, capsules, oil, drop, liquid medicines, food supplements, juice, sharbat, medicinal substitutes of cosmetics etc. Another religious society called ISKCON is also making its contribution in bringing the world closer to Ayurved and medicinal use of the various herbs.

ISKCON (INTERNATIONAL SOCIETY FOR KRISHNA CONSCIOUSNESS)

The International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON), also known as the **Hare Krishna movement**, is a Hindu Vaishnava religious organization. It was founded in 1966 in New York City by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada. Its core beliefs are based on traditional Hindu scriptures such as the *Srimad Bhagavatam* and the *Bhagavad-gita*, both of which, according to the traditional Hindu view, date back more than 5,000 years. The distinctive appearance of the movement and its culture come from the Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition, which has had adherents in India since the late 15th century and Western converts since the early 1930s. Non-sectarian in its ideals, ISKCON was formed to spread the practice of bhakti yoga (devotion to God), in which aspirant devotees (*bhaktas*) dedicate their thoughts and actions towards pleasing the Supreme Lord, Krishna (God). ISKCON today is a worldwide confederation of more than 700 centres. In recent decades the movement's most rapid expansions in terms of numbers of membership have been within Eastern Europe. A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Prabhupada disseminated Gaudiya Vaishnava Theology in the Western world through extensive writings and translations, including the Bhagavad Gita, Srimad Bhagavatam (Bhagavata Purana), Chaitanya Charitamrita and other scriptures. ISKCON devotees worship Krishna as the highest form of God, *svayam bhagavan*, and often refer to him as "the Supreme Personality of Godhead" in writing, which was a phrase coined by Prabhupada in his books on the subject. In fact, ISKCON is conscious of the utility of herbs and the importance of the Ayurvedic treatment. The reason of this consciousness is the mentor A.C. Bhaktivedanta Srila Prabhupada's unshaken faith in Ayurved and herbal treatment. In his whole life he hardly took the allopathic medicines. Not only this, he also taught his followers to go to Ayurved for the cure of their diseases. This is probably why all the devotees of ISKCON with hardly any exception cure their diseases through the herbal treatment. This step of the devotees serves as a strong motivation and appeal to all to have faith in Ayurved and herbal treatment.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To explore and be familiar with the life-style of the ISKCON devotees.
- To find out their faith in ayurved and herbal treatment.
- To learn about their knowledge of the herbs and other medicinal plants.
- To discover the names of the herbal products used by them for various diseases.
- To explore the causes of their using the herbal products.
- To know about their views on the future of ayurveda in India.
- To listen to them speaking on herbal renaissance.
- To explore the major differences between allopathy and ayurved.

HYPOTHESIS

- ISKCON is a popular religious movement started by A.C. Bhaktivedanta Swami Srila Prabhupada.
- India has hundreds of branches of ISKCON that teach the devotees to live in peace through spiritual meditation, devotional singing, dancing and chanting.
- Under the influence of Srila Prabhupada's teachings and advice, the devotees abstain from allopathy and take only the ayurvedic medicines and herbal treatment to cure their diseases.
- They are familiar with the value and importance of ayurved as well as with the herbal richness in India.
- All the ISKCON branches in India have beautiful botanical gardens with several medicinally useful herbal plants in them.
- Each of the ISKCON branches has a mini-ayurvedic aushadhalaya in it to cure the patients.
- Spiritual meditation and several other forms of yoga are adopted to keep physically and mentally fit.
- Ayurved is powerful enough to cure every disease.
- Herbal renaissance has influenced the ISKCON devotees to such an extent that they have started using only the herbal medicines.
- The visitors to the ISKCON branches feel motivated to accept the value of the herbs and to choose ayurvedic treatment on seeing the devotees use the herbal products.

METHODOLOGY

The work is an empirical study of 500 ISKCON devotees, each from Vrindavan, Mayapur, Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore ISKCON branches. The investigator adopted participant observation method in order to make a scientific study. For the purpose, schedule technique was adopted. In the interview schedule prepared for the purpose of the UGC Major Research Project, in addition to the other questions relating to the other aspects in the interview schedule, 10 questions were included about the ISKCON devotees' love of ayurveda and medicinal herbs. The investigator has tried his best to make his work scientific. He followed all the steps of scientific method. He randomly selected 500 units of information and asked them each all the questions one by one.

TABLE-1: POSSIBILITY OF CURE THROUGH HERBAL TREATMENT

STUDY AREA	YES	%	NO	%	NEUTRAL	%	IGNORANT	%	TOTAL
VRINDAVAN	97	97	NIL	-	3	3	NIL	-	100
MAYAPUR	91	91	1	1	4	4	4	4	100
MUMBAI	89	89	5	5	4	4	2	2	100
DELHI	81	81	10	10	9	9	NIL	-	100
BANGALORE	65	65	23	23	7	7	5	5	100
TOTAL	423	84.6	39	7.8	27	5.4	11	2.2	500

Table-1 displays the varied opinion of the devotees about the possibility of cure through herbal treatment. The number and percentage of the devotees at ISKCON Vrindavan, Mayapur, Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore who are of the opinion that cure through herbal treatment is possible is respectively 97%, 91%, 89%, 81% and 65%; of those who have a purely negative approach to the cure through herbal treatment is respectively 0%, 1%, 5%, 10% and 23%; of those who do not break the ice and remain neutral is respectively 3%, 4%, 4%, 9% and 7%; of those who do not have any idea about it is respectively 0%, 4%, 2%, 0% and 5%.

TABLE-2: VIEWS ON AYURVEDA OR ALLOPATHY

STUDY AREA	AYURVED	%	ALLOPATHY	%	BOTH	%	TOTAL
VRINDAVAN	82	82	4	4	14	14	100
MAYAPUR	91	91	2	2	7	7	100
MUMBAI	85	85	1	1	14	14	100
DELHI	41	41	10	10	49	49	100
BANGALORE	64	64	21	21	15	15	100
TOTAL	363	72.6	38	7.6	99	19.8	500

Table-2 reveals the devotees' faith in allopathy and ayurved. The number and percentage of the devotees at ISKCON Vrindavan, Mayapur, Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore who are of the opinion that ayurved is better than allopathy is respectively 82%, 91%, 85%, 41% and 64%; of those who find allopathy better and more effective than ayurved is respectively 4%, 2%, 1%, 10% and 21%; of those who take them equally with equal effects is respectively 14%, 7%, 14%, 49% and 15%. It means that both ayurved and allopathy are popular among the ISKCON devotees and they go for them accordingly.

TABLE-3: CAUSES OF AYURVED'S BEING BETTER

STUDY AREA	ANCIENT SYSTEM OF MEDICINES	%	USE OF HERBS	%	MOST SUITABLE FOR VEGETARIANS	%	OTHER	%	TOTAL
VRINDAVAN	30	30	32	32	34	34	4	4	100
MAYAPUR	41	41	10	10	45	45	4	4	100
MUMBAI	35	35	24	24	31	31	10	10	100
DELHI	23	23	35	35	40	40	2	2	100
BANGALORE	44	44	13	13	41	41	2	2	100
TOTAL	173	34.6	114	22.8	191	38.2	22	4.4	500

Table-3 mirrors the various causes of ayurved's being better than allopathy. The number and percentage of the devotees at ISKCON Vrindavan, Mayapur, Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore who are of the opinion that it is the most ancient system of medicines is respectively 30%, 41%, 35%, 23% and 44%; of those who believe that in ayurved herbs are used is respectively 32%, 10%, 24%, 35% and 13%; of those who find it suitable for vegetarians is respectively 34%, 45%, 31%, 40% and 41%; of those who find it better for certain other reasons is respectively 4%, 4%, 10%, 2% and 2%.

TABLE-4: HERBAL TREATMENT: A MATTER OF VEDAS AND VAISHNAVISM

STUDY AREA	YES	%	NO	%	NEUTRAL	%	IGNORANT	%	TOTAL
VRINDAVAN	98	98	NIL	-	2	2	NIL	-	100
MAYAPUR	100	100	NIL	-	NIL	-	NIL	-	100
MUMBAI	95	95	NIL	-	4	4	1	1	100
DELHI	98	98	NIL	-	1	1	1	1	100
BANGALORE	100	100	NIL	-	NIL	-	NIL	-	100
TOTAL	491	98.2	NIL	0	7	1.4	2	0.4	500

Table-4 displays the opinion of the devotees about the roots of herbal treatment in the Vedas. The number and percentage of the devotees at ISKCON Vrindavan, Mayapur, Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore who are of the opinion that it is a matter of Vedas is respectively 98%, 100%, 95%, 98% and 100%; of those who do not accept this fact is 0% at all the centres of the study area; of those who remain neutral and do not break the ice is respectively 2%, 0%, 4%, 1% and 0%; of those who are ignorant of this fact is respectively 0%, 0%, 1%, 1% and 0%.

TABLE-5: PIONEER OF AYURVEDA & HERBAL TREATMENT IN ISKCON

STUDY AREA	SRILA PRABHUPADA	%	JAIPATAKA DAS	%	MADHU PANDIT	%	OTHER	%	TOTAL
VRINDAVAN	98	98	NIL	-	NIL	-	2	2	100
MAYAPUR	100	100	NIL	-	NIL	-	NIL	-	100
MUMBAI	100	100	NIL	-	NIL	-	NIL	-	100
DELHI	97	97	NIL	-	NIL	-	3	3	100
BANGALORE	96	96	NIL	-	NIL	-	4	4	100
TOTAL	491	98.2	NIL	0	NIL	0	9	1.8	500

Table-5 displays the names of the ISKCON personalities who proved themselves to be pioneers in the field of herbal treatment. The number and percentage of the devotees at ISKCON Vrindavan, Mayapur, Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore who are of the opinion that Srila Prabhupada was the pioneer in the herbal treatment is respectively 98%, 100%, 100%, 97% and 96%; of those who regard Sri Jaypataka Das as the pioneer in the field of herbal treatment is 0% at all the ISKCON falling in the study area; again 0% devotees from the centres of the study area consider Madhu Pandit the pioneer; of those who believe some others to be the pioneer is respectively 2%, 0%, 0%, 3% and 4%.

TABLE-6: ISKCON'S CONTRIBUTION IN HERBAL RENAISSANCE IN INDIA

STUDY AREA	YES	%	NO	%	NEUTRAL	%	IGNORANT	%	TOTAL
VRINDAVAN	99	99	NIL	-	1	1	NIL	-	100
MAYAPUR	100	100	NIL	-	NIL	-	NIL	-	100
MUMBAI	81	81	4	4	5	5	10	10	100
DELHI	95	95	NIL	NIL	5	5	NIL	-	100
BANGALORE	91	91	3	3	4	4	2	2	100
TOTAL	466	93.2	7	1.4	15	3	12	2.4	500

Table-6 highlights the role of ISKCON the herbal renaissance in India. The number and percentage of the devotees at ISKCON Vrindavan, Mayapur, Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore who are sure about the role of ISKCON in the herbal renaissance in India is respectively 99%, 100%, 81%, 95% and 91%; of those who do not believe so at these centres is respectively 0%, 0%, 4%, 0% and 3%; of those who do not break the ice and remain neutral on this point is respectively 1%, 0%, 5%, 5% and 4%; of those who find helpless being ignorant is respectively 0%, 0%, 10%, 0% and 2%.

TABLE-7: WAYS OF ISKCON'S CONTRIBUTION IN HERBAL RENAISSANCE

STUDY AREA	USE OF HERBS	%	USE OF COW-PRODUCTS	%	USE OF AYURVEDIC MEDICINES	%	OTHER	%	TOTAL
VRINDAVAN	27	27	51	51	20	20	2	2	100
MAYAPUR	21	21	55	55	16	16	8	8	100
MUMBAI	25	25	59	59	10	10	6	6	100
DELHI	22	22	56	56	18	18	4	4	100
BANGALORE	25	25	49	49	20	20	6	6	100
TOTAL	120	24	270	54	84	16.8	26	5.2	500

Table -7 displays the various ways in which ISKCON makes contribution to the herbal renaissance in India. The number and percentage of the devotees at ISKCON Vrindavan, Mayapur, Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore who give the first priority to the use of herbs by the devotees is respectively 27%, 21%, 25%, 22% and 25%; of those who give the highest weightage to the cow-products is respectively 51%, 55%, 59%, 56% and 49%; of those who mention the use of the ayurvedic medicines in ISKCON is respectively 20%, 16%, 10%, 18% and 20%; of those who quote the use of certain other things is respectively 2%, 8%, 6%, 4% and 6%.

TABLE-8: FUTURE OF AYURVEDA IN INDIA

STUDY AREA	BRIGHT	%	DARK	%	NEUTRAL	%	IGNORANT	%	TOTAL
VRINDAVAN	98	98	NIL	-	2	2	NIL	-	100
MAYAPUR	100	100	NIL	-	NIL	-	NIL	-	100
MUMBAI	97	97	NIL	-	3	3	NIL	-	100
DELHI	90	90	NIL	-	10	10	NIL	-	100
BANGALORE	100	100	NIL	-	NIL	-	NIL	-	100
TOTAL	485	97	NIL	0	15	3	NIL	0	500

Table-8 focus the facts on the future of ayurveda in India. The number and percentage of the devotees at ISKCON Vrindavan, Mayapur, Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore who are dead sure about the bright future of ayurveda in India is respectively 98%, 100%, 97%, 90% and 100%; of those who find the future of ayurveda in India dark is 0% ; of those who remain silent on the point and do not break the ice is respectively 2%, 0%, 3%, 10% and 0%; of those who are ignorant about it is 0%.

TABLE-9: FORMS OF HERBAL & AYURVEDIC TREATMENT IN ISKCON

STUDY AREA	USE OF NEEM LEAVES	%	USE OF HERBAL JELLY	%	USE OF HERBAL POWDER	%	TABLETS & CAPSULES	%	TOTAL
VRINDAVAN	12	12	24	24	35	35	29	29	100
MAYAPUR	31	31	27	27	32	32	10	10	100
MUMBAI	9	9	41	41	48	48	2	2	100
DELHI	17	17	38	38	39	39	6	6	100
BANGALORE	19	19	26	26	41	41	14	14	100
TOTAL	88	17.6	156	31.2	195	39	61	12.2	500

Table-9 displays the various forms of ayurvedic and herbal treatment adopted in ISKCON in order to cure the diseases. The number and percentage of the devotees at ISKCON Vrindavan, Mayapur, Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore who mention the use of neem leaves for the cure of diseases is respectively 12%, 31%, 9%, 17% and 19%; of those who mention the use of herbal jelly is respectively 24%, 27%, 41%, 38% and 26%; of those who mention the use of herbal powder is respectively 35%, 32%, 48%, 39% and 41%; of those who mention the use of ayurvedic tablets and capsules is respectively 29%, 10%, 2%, 6% and 14%.

FINDINGS

In the age when everybody wants to get allopathic treatment, there is a herbal renaissance. According to 84.6% units, ISKCON is playing a tremendous role in the herbal renaissance. The percentage of the devotees who for the herbal treatment and who have faith in the power of ayurveda and herbal treatment is very high. It is (84.6%). The highest and the lowest percentage of those who have faith in the power of the herbal treatment is respectively 97% at ISKCON Vrindavan and 81% at ISKCON Delhi; of those who have a negative approach to the herbal treatment is respectively 23% at ISKCON Bangalore and 0% at ISKCON Vrindavan; of those who remain neutral is respectively 9% at ISKCON Delhi and 3% at ISKCON Vrindavan; of those who are ignorant of this fact is respectively 5% at ISKCON Bangalore and 0% at ISKCON Vrindavan and Delhi.

TABLE- 1

It is true that the devotees take both the allopathic and herbal and ayurvedic medicines for the cure of their diseases, but the majority of them (72.6%) agree that ayurved is better than allopathy. The highest and the lowest percentage of those who find ayurved better than allopathy is respectively 91% at ISKCON Mayapur and 41% at ISKCON Delhi; of those who find allopathy better than ayurved is respectively 21% at ISKCON Bangalore and 1% at ISKCON Mumbai; of those who find both equally important is respectively 49% at ISKCON Delhi and 7% at ISKCON Mayapur.

TABLE- 2

The ISKCON devotees are Hindu Vaishnavas. They are vegetarians, that is why, they (38.2%) prefer ayurvedic and herbal treatment to the allopathic one. The highest and the lowest percentage of those who consider ayurved the most ancient system of medicines is respectively 44% at Bangalore and 23% at Delhi; of those who consider it better than allopathy because in it herbs are used is respectively 35% at Delhi and 10% at Mayapur; of those who find it suitable for the vegetarians is respectively 45% at Mayapur and 31% at Mumbai; of those who give some other reasons of its being better than allopathy is respectively 10% at Mumbai and 2% at Delhi and Bangalore.

TABLE- 3

98.2% of the ISKCON devotees consider the ayurved a matter of Vedas and want everyone to accept it as the most authentic system of medicines. The highest and the lowest percentage of those who consider ayurved a matter of Vedas is respectively 100% at ISKCON Mayapur and Bangalore; of those who do not

consider it a matter of Vedas is 0% at all the ISKCON centres of study area; of those who find themselves neutral on this point is respectively 4% at ISKCON Mumbai and 0% at ISKCON Mayapur and Bangalore; of those who claim to be ignorant of this fact is respectively 1% at ISKCON Mumbai and Delhi and 0% at ISKCON Vrindavan, Mayapur and Bangalore.

TABLE- 4

All the ISKCON gurus emphasise ayurved and want the devotees to avoid the allopathic treatment, but according to 98.2% units of information, the pioneer of ayurved in ISKCON is Srila Prabhupada. The highest and the lowest percentage of those who consider Srila Prabhupada the pioneer in the field of herbal treatment is respectively 100% at ISKCON Mayapur and Mumbai and 96% at ISKCON Bangalore; of those who consider Sri Jaypatkadas and Madhu Pandit the pioneers in this field is 0% at all the ISKCON centres falling in the study area; of those who consider the other ISKCON personalities the pioneers in this field is respectively 4% at ISKCON Bangalore and 0% at ISKCON Mayapur and Mumbai.

TABLE- 5

ISKCON makes contribution to ayurved and herbal treatment (93.2%) in several ways. Its greatest contribution is its emphasis on the use of cow-urine and cow-milk products. The highest and the lowest percentage of those who believe that ISKCON is playing a tremendous role in the herbal renaissance in India is 100% at ISKCON Mayapur and 81% at ISKCON Mumbai; of those who do not believe so is respectively 4% at ISKCON Mumbai and 0% at ISKCON Vrindavan, Mayapur and Bangalore; of those who remain neutral on this point is respectively 5% at ISKCON Mumbai and Delhi and 0% at ISKCON Mayapur; of those who find themselves ignorant on this point is respectively 10% at ISKCON Mumbai and 0% at ISKCON Vrindavan, Mayapur and Delhi.

TABLE- 6

The various ways by which ISKCON is making its contribution in herbal renaissance are the use of herbs and herbal products (24%), cow-products (54%), ayurvedic medicines (16.8%) and other things (5.2%). The highest and the lowest percentage of those who give the highest weightage to the use of herbs in ISKCON is respectively 27% at ISKCON Vrindavan and 21% at ISKCON Mayapur; of those who give the highest weightage to the use of cow-products is respectively 59% at ISKCON Mumbai and 49% at ISKCON Bangalore; of those who give the highest weightage to the use of ayurvedic medicines by the devotees is respectively 20% at ISKCON Vrindavan and Bangalore and 10% at ISKCON Mumbai; of those who mention the name of some other things is respectively 6% at ISKCON Mumbai and Bangalore and 2% at ISKCON Vrindavan.

TABLE-7

The ISKCON devotees (97%) strongly hope that despite the fact that in the modern age the people lack patience and want some immediate cure through allopathic medicines, the ayurved has a bright future. The highest and the lowest percentage of those who give the highest weightage to the bright future of ayurveda in India is respectively 100% at ISKCON Mayapur and Bangalore and 90% at ISKCON Delhi; of those who believe that the future of ayurveda is dark is 0% at all ISKCON centres falling in the study area; of those who remain neutral is respectively 10% at ISKCON Delhi and 0% at ISKCON Mayapur and Bangalore; of those who are ignorant of this fact is 0% at all ISKCON centres falling in the study area.

TABLE- 8

Herbal jelly (31.2%) and herbal powder (39%) are the most popular forms of herbal treatment in ISKCON. Whenever anyone of them has any skin problem or any wound, they use either herbal jelly or powder for its cure. The highest and the lowest percentage of those who mention to the use of neem leaves is respectively 31% at ISKCON Mayapur and 9% at ISKCON Mumbai; of those who use the herbal jelly is respectively 41% at ISKCON Mumbai and 24% at ISKCON Vrindavan; of those who use herbal powder is respectively 48% at ISKCON Mumbai and 32% at ISKCON Mayapur; of those who use ayurvedic tablets and capsules is respectively 29% at ISKCON Vrindavan and 2% at ISKCON Mumbai.

TABLE- 9

The number and percentage of the devotees at ISKCON Vrindavan, Mayapur, Mumbai, Delhi and Bangalore who mention the use of neem leaves for the cure of diseases is respectively 12%, 31%, 9%, 17% and 19%; of those who mention the use of herbal jelly is respectively 24%, 27%, 41%, 38% and 26%; of those who mention the use of herbal powder is respectively 35%, 32%, 48%, 39% and 41%; of those who mention the use of ayurvedic tablets and capsules is respectively 29%, 10%, 2%, 6% and 14%.

SUMMING UP

- ISKCON is a popular religious movement of the twentieth century which is chiefly concerned with the spread of the teachings of Lord Krishna.
- The ISKCON devotees lead a simple life and observe the rules of discipline.
- ISKCON keeps its devotees in an organised way through discipline, sanctity and the programmes of Krishna Consciousness.
- ISKCON teaches its devotees the value and importance of ayurved and herbal treatment, and motivates them to undergo only ayurved and herbal treatment.
- The botanical gardens, green-surroundings, basil-plants at places, cow-worship and the use of cow-milk, gau-mootra for medicinal purposes etc, are some of the things in ISKCON that speak of the devotees' love of ayurved and herbs.
- The spiritual environment, the meditation and their undergoing yoga exercises reveal their love of yoga.
- All the religions teach their followers the importance and value of ayurved and herbal treatment, but it is only the Hindu religion that chiefly values them.
- Some of the sages, saints and scholars that are playing their role in bringing the people of the world closer to the ayurved and herbs are- Swami Ramdev, Acharya Balkrishna and Kripaluji Maharaj.
- ISKCON is playing an immense role in making the herbal renaissance successful by growing herbal plants in its gardens, having ayurvedic aushdhalayas and by motivating its devotees to undergo yoga and spiritual meditation.
- Ayurved is much better than Alopahy, and that Ayurved can cure every disease.

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