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Integration of Herbal Drugs in Modern Healthcare Systems

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ABSTRACT

The application of herbal drugs has become an extensive part of the human history because the drug has been in use since centuries and all over the continents of Ayurveda in India, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), to the traditional African and Native American medicine systems because the drug has been the major provider of health care before the emergence of synthetic drugs. However, the systematic adoption into health care systems has not been expeditious, consistent and consistent enough so as to be able to hold an adjuvative or substitute position, but not necessarily fit in the mainstream clinical practice. It is a literature review of the evolving role of herbal medicine in contemporary healthcare based on critical analysis of existing literature on its effectiveness, safety, pharmacological and regulatory acceptability in other locations. Such points are historical concepts, treatment role in the management of the chronic and lifestyle-based condition, advances in the clinical research, the persisting issues of standardization and quality control, and the potential of the national and international regulatory body to ensure authenticity and safety.

Key Words:

Herbal medicines; Modern healthcare integration; Complementary and alternative medicine (CAM); Phytotherapy; Standardization challenges.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Medicine Traditional Ayurveda In India (Ayurveda), china (Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM)) and the Middle East and South Asia (Unani medicine), herbal medicines have long been used as a form of preventive, curative, and management of most common diseases in traditional medicine. The systems are based on the holistic philosophies, which consider in the harmony of the mind, body, and environment and the utilization of the plant-derived formulations as a preventative effect, rather than as a therapeutic one to promote health and well-being, in general. The recent decades have seen a revival of the interest in the herbal and natural remedies available across the

globe, which could be explained by the growing concern regarding the adverse effects of synthetic drugs on the human body, as well as the increasing cost of conventional care[1].

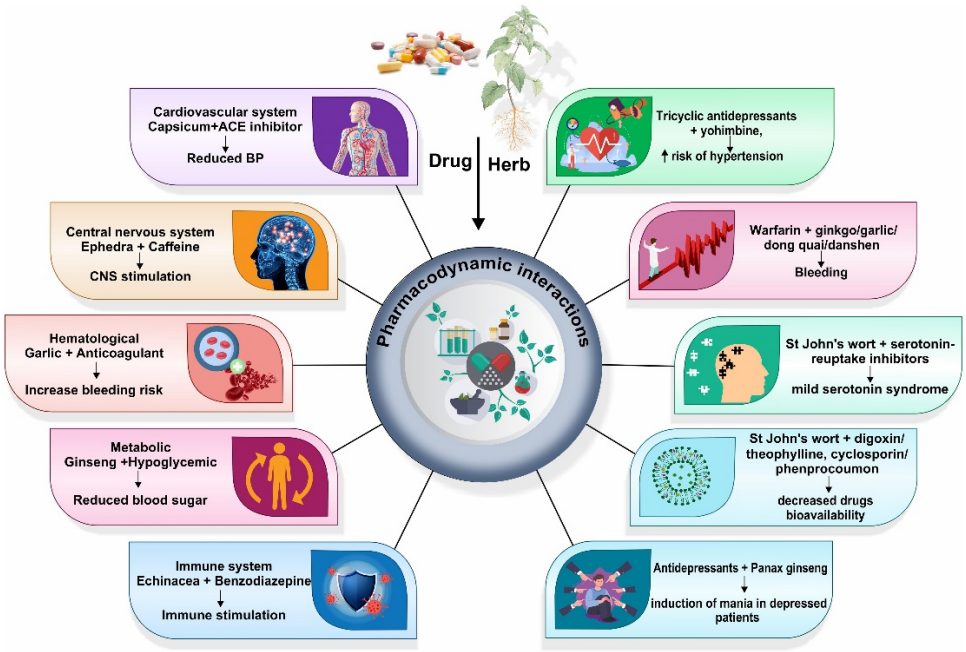

Figure 1: Herbal Drugs in Modern Healthcare

This has been further augmented by the rising global prevalence rates of chronic and lifestyle diseases such as diabetes, high blood pressure, arthritis, and heart diseases, which are typically chronic and in which patients are continually requiring cheaper, less dangerous and more environmental-friendly treatment interventions. In addition, change in patient attitude towards wellness has also led to the implementation of integrative and holistic approaches that are premised on the incorporation of both traditional patient knowledge and modern scientific evidence. This new focus has not only rejuvenated the scientific study of bioactive compounds of medicinal plants, but also caused efforts by global health systems to take the route of introducing herbal drugs into mainstream medical practice, thereby giving a chance to innovate, develop interdisciplinary relationships, and reform policies[2].

1.1 Background of the Study

The importance of herbal medicine in curing human ailments has been so significant and throughout the entire planet, traditional medicine methods such as Ayurveda in India, Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM), and the Unani tradition in the Middle East all have utilized herbal medicine as a basis. The utilization of the plant-based formulations was not only limited to curing the illnesses, but also to providing the general wellbeing of people, based on the formulations of these systems. The introduction of modern medicine in the 19th and 20th century made synthetic drugs the type of therapy of utmost significance, which led to the gradual relegation of herbal practices. However, the renewed concern regarding side effects, drug resistance and economic burden of the chronic illnesses have rekindled the interest in natural and herbal medicines[3].

The modern environment had a huge share of the global pharmaceutical sector with herbal medicines, as people are increasingly interested in the herbal medicine and alternative health that

would be safer and more holistic and complementary. Phytochemistry, pharmacology and biotechnology have resulted in identification of active constituents of herbs such as curcumin in turmeric, withanolides in ashwagandha and ginkgolides in *Ginkgo biloba*. Nevertheless, despite their potential in treatment mainstream integration is yet to be realized due to standardization problems, herb-drug interaction, absence of clinical trials and poor regulatory harmonization[4].

1.2 Objectives of the review:

- To explore the current status of herbal drugs in modern healthcare.
- To evaluate scientific evidence and methodologies used for validation.
- To analyze the challenges of integrating herbal medicine with allopathic systems.
- To highlight opportunities and recommendations for future integration.

1.3 Importance of the topic

The global market of herbal medicines will only be growing steadily in the years to come, in significant proportions, because of the rising consumer demand in the direction of natural and plant-based medicine, the rising trend in preventative healthcare, and the enhanced acceptance of research initiatives that would help to demonstrate the efficacy of the traditional medicine. This also correlates with an overall shift in the society towards a well, sustainable and holistic mode of treating, which has allowed herbal products to be more acceptable and desirable in different groups of patients in the developed as well as developing nations[5].

Despite the trends mentioned above, the application of herbal medicines to the modern health care systems is still somewhat fragmented and dispersed among the countries due to the absence of strict scientific validation, irregularities in the quality regulation, lack of large-scale clinical trials, and poor coordination of the regulations[6]. These loopholes influence the consumer confidence and restrict the usage of herbal medicines in the world as the effective treatment method. In that way, one has to address the existing evidence in closer detail to close this gap, draw the connections between traditional and modern scientific endeavors, and determine how to integrate them accordingly[7].

2. HISTORICAL AND GLOBAL PERSPECTIVES

One of the most ancient and one of the oldest medical practice is herbal medicine which is closely related to the cultural, societal, and religious life of ancient civilizations of the entire planet. Plants and extracts were not only considered as therapeutic entities in the Indigenous traditions of the healing practices, but they were considered as the constituents of the natural order, including balance, harmony and well-being[8]. The foundations of healthcare in thousands of years and the foundations of medical knowledge were oral traditions handed down through generations or written in ancient texts like the Charaka Samhita in India, the Huangdi Neijing in China and the Canon of Medicine in the Islamic world. These medical customs were oriented on preventive medicine and holistic treatment and individualized therapies were directed at physical and mental health[9].

Although in the 19th and 20th centuries, modern drugs were developed, which were of much importance in drug discovery, plants played a significant role, with famous examples of willow bark-aspirin, cinchona-quinine and opium poppy-morphine. It is in this manner that herbal wisdom of the traditional wisdom laid the basis of some of the biggest discoveries in the field of medicine ever[10]. The evolution of herbal medicine into modern medicine during the last several decades has been an interesting process with quite an intertwined mixture of the ancient knowledge and modern scientific evidence[11].

The development of phytochemical, pharmacological and biotechnology enables now the identification of active ingredients, the normalization of preparations and the testing of safety and efficacy which overcome the shift between traditional and evidence-based medicine[12].

2.1 Traditional Systems as Foundations of Herbal Medicine

- **Ayurveda (India):** The Ayurveda that was established over three millennia ago is based on the concept of inner harmony between the spirit, mind, and body. Some of the famous herbs are noted Which include Withania somnifera (Ashwagandha), *Curcuma longa* (Turkish turmeric), and Tinospora cordifolia (Guduchi) that are written in the classical text of the Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita. These cures remain the subjects of integrative healthcare in India and are under active research in regard to pharmacological activity[13].
- **Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM):** TCM that has a history dating as far back as 2500 years, incorporates the use of herbal preparations as part of the treatment regimen that incorporates acupuncture and Tai Chi as the complex treatments. Some of them include Panax ginseng which is an energy source, *Ginkgo biloba* which is a brain stimulator and Ephedra which is a breathing aid. The TCM holism has significantly influenced the policies of integrative healthcare in China and elsewhere in the world[14].
- **African Herbal Practices:** The distinctive characteristic that defines the indigenous African medicine is that most of the infections, inflammation, and chronic diseases are cured with the assistance of the local plants. In modern phytotherapy, such contributions as malaria treatments using Artemisia afra and immune-enhancing treatments using Hypoxis hemerocallidea (African potato) are included[15].
- **Other Global Traditions:** The Native American, Middle Eastern (Unani), and Latin American cultures also have much information about plant-based remedies. All this practice underlines the point that the use of herbal medicine is universal in regard to the human health problems[16].

2.2 Transition Toward Modern Healthcare Systems

The 19th and 20th centuries were the turning point in the history of medicine as synthetic pharmaceuticals started to dominate the world healthcare system and change the very concept of disease treatment and perception fundamentally. A lot of these synthetic drugs were actually inspired by the compounds found in plants, and it proves the crucial importance of herbal remedies as the predecessors of the modern pharmacology. The case in point would be the creation of aspirin, one of the most common drugs in the world, which is based on salicylic acid that was present in the willow bark and used to treat pain and fever centuries before[17].

The following milestones point to the long-standing role of traditional herbal wisdom in the development of modern pharmacological sciences. Nonetheless, as the practice of synthetic chemistry began to emerge swiftly along with the emergence of industrial-scale drug production, the practice of herbal medicine became even more marginalized across most regions, especially in Western countries. Historical medicine was frequently humped off as anecdotal, unscientific, or insufficiently rigorously validated by the then-emerging biomedical paradigms. It was more than a scientific skepticism that led to this shift, but also an economic and political one, as the pharmaceutical industry started to take over the healthcare markets with standardized, patentable and profit-oriented products[18].

2.3 Contemporary Global Integration

In healthcare in the various regions today, the modern application of herbal medicine is varied:

- **China:** TCM is a healthcare system that has official status in the country, and the herbal prescriptions are distributed in the hospitals together with the traditional medications. Institutions have a strong support of the TCM departments since more than 90 percent of Chinese hospitals accommodate them[19].
- **Germany-** Germany is a perfect example of a successful incorporation of herbs as a western model. Herb medicine, such as St. Johns Wort (*Hypericum perforatum*) and Echinacea are often prescribed and covered under insurance as a reaction to strict regulation by the Commission E[20].
- **India:** In India, Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy have been institutionalised whereby the Ministry of AYUSH was established that markets herbal medicine locally and internationally. Still pending issues however are clinical validation and standardization[21].
- **United States:** The dietary supplements primarily come under either the category of herbal products under the Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act (DSHEA). They are not restricted in a strict sense though they are taken in large quantities to be considered mainstream medicines.
- **Africa and Latin America:** Herbal medicine is still one of the primary health care providers to the masses and, in most instances, so due to its low cost and because it is culturally affiliated to it. The traditional health care of the traditional healers forms the first line of healthcare in most rural locations.

3. SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE AND CLINICAL APPLICATIONS

Introduction of herbal drugs in the modern health care system should not simply be given a nod of acceptance to the traditional use of the same drugs but also their manufacturability, their efficacy and its ability to treat patients through the scientific means should be scrutinized intensively. The range of studies on herbal medicines has increased with many folds within the last few decades employing vast combinations of research strategies including in vitro studies, animal trials, randomized controlled trials (RCTs), and meta-analyses. These studies aim to substantiate conventional claims, active phytochemicals and standard dosage forms which could be used in clinical practice[22].

Table 1 provides the herbal drugs of choice which have been widely researched on the pharmacological action and clinical significance. Curcumin, as an illustration, is a bioactive and anti-inflammatory and antioxidant compound of turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), which has pre-clinical and RCT-supported effects in regards to arthritis and cancer prevention. Another herb that has been widely used in Ayurveda, Withania somnifera (Ashwagandha) has demonstrated stress reducing effects and neuroprotectivity effects in clinical trial in humans due to withanolides activity. *Ginkgo biloba*, a flavonoid, terpenoid-based plant, is also able to boost cognitive enhancement and management of dementia; however, it has been discovered to have inconsistent outcomes, depending on clinical trials. Aloe vera has been used since ancient times to treat wound healing with polysaccharides and glycoproteins as the active components, which are used in skin disorders, although clinical case studies are the basis of this. Similarly, green tea (*Camellia sinensis*) catechins are antioxidants and cardioprotectants, and such effects were substantiated in studies of large-scale epidemiology[23].

Table 1: Herbal Drugs and Clinical Evidence[24]

Herbal Drug	Primary Bioactive Component	Clinical Applications	Evidence Type
Turmeric (*Curcuma longa*)	Curcumin	Anti-inflammatory, arthritis, cancer prevention	Pre-clinical + RCTs
Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera)	Withanolides	Stress reduction, neuroprotection	Human trials
Ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*)	Flavonoids, Terpenoids	Cognitive enhancement, dementia	Mixed clinical trials
Aloe vera	Polysaccharides, Glycoproteins	Wound healing, dermatological use	Clinical case studies
Green tea (*Camellia sinensis*)	Catechins	Antioxidant, cardiovascular health	Epidemiological studies

4. METHODOLOGIES AND FINDINGS

Having herbal medicines developed in context of scientific validation should be gradual starting with laboratory tests, then an extension to clinical practice[25]. The research methods that have been utilized in ascertaining the safety, efficacy and mechanism of action of herbal drugs are numerous. The input of each phase is distinct, but narrow, and it becomes difficult and complicated to be incorporated into the existing healthcare[26].

4.1 In Vitro Studies

The kind of research that is conducted outside of living organisms through the use of cell cultures, tissues, or biochemical assays is known as in vitro research. The reasons why these are necessary studies are:

- **Phytochemical screening:** This involves the identification and isolation of bioactive compounds such as flavonoid, alkaloid, terpenes and saponins[27].
- **Mechanistic knowledge:** Interactions of herbal extracts with enzymes, signaling pathways and receptors. NF-kB signaling has been indicatively suppressed in vitro by curcumin of turmeric which is the reason behind its anti-inflammatory effects[28].
- **Advantages:** inexpensive, quick and less morally questionable[29].
- **Limitations**: Findings do not always seem to be relevant in living things due to the complexity of metabolism and bioavailability.

4.2 Animal Models

Animal research is a middle ground between laboratory experiments and human experiments. They are used to:

- **Identify pharmacodynamics:** identifying the effect of herbal compounds on biological reactions (e.g. the effect of Gymnema sylvestre on blood glucose in diabetic rats).
- **Toxicological examination:** The identification of the safe levels of dosages and side effects before human intake.
- **Pathology-specific models:** The anti-inflammatory herbs are normally tested on rodent models of arthritis.
- **Advantages:** Provides us with information about the whole organism interactions, metabolism and toxicity.
- **Limitations:** The ethical concerns, species differences and the inaccuracies of extrapolating the results into humans[30].

4.3 Randomized Controlled Trials (RCTs)

RCTs are considered to be the gold standard of evidence in the field of clinical evidence and they are being actively applied in the studies of herbal medicine. These experiments involve determining the relative efficacy by placing human subjects randomly within herbal therapy and a placebo or standard care.

- **Application:** It has been applied in the following conditions: osteoarthritis (e.g., trials on Boswellia extracts), diabetes (e.g., bitter melon supplementation) and stress disorders (e.g., ashwagandha root extract).
- **Benefits:** Well designed, making them sensitive cause-effect evidence of efficacy and safety.
- **Limitations:** Costly, time consuming, not consistent with herbal preparations and problem of blinding such as taste or smell of herbal products.

5. REGULATORY FRAMEWORKS AND POLICIES

The regulatory frameworks that influence the standards on quality, safety, efficacy and commercial application have a lot to influence the incorporation of the herbal medicaments in the modern healthcare domains. Herbal drugs are also not doing well as there is also variation in the origin of the plants, the processing approach, and even culture in comparison to the synthetic pharmaceuticals. The regulators of the world have come up with solutions to such issues but the way in which they do it is very different depending on the regions that caused dissimilar acceptability and market penetration[31].

5.1 WHO Guidelines

World health organization (WHO) has developed detailed guidelines to ensure the quality and safety and effectiveness of herbal medicines and this can be one of the sources that can be used by policy makers and regulatory bodies across the globe. Those principles highlight the significance of Good Agricultural and Collection Practices (GACP) that implies that medicinal plants should be cultivated, harvested, and stored under the controlled conditions to preserve the therapeutic quality and reduce the variability of active components. On top of this, Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) are emphasized in order to achieve uniformity of herbal preparations manufacturing in order to achieve purity and stability of the products, and to make sure that the manufacturing process is not contaminated.

Another valuable part about the WHO structure is the establishment of the pharmacovigilance systems that seek to quantify and record adverse reactions of the herbal drugs hence enhance their safety profile and help in managing them using evidence-based control. Though the model suggested by WHO provides a reference model that is well known worldwide, it needs to be stated that such guidelines are not intended to be implemented as a law enforcement and the manner in which they are applied in various regions is based on the policies and regulation issues of specific countries which causes certain inconsistencies[32].

5.2 European Union (EMA)

In the European Union, herbal medicines are regulated by the European Medicines Agency (EMA) in two key entities, which include Traditional Use Registration (TUR) and Well-Established Use (WEU). TUR attaches to products, at least 30 years of documented use of which, and at least 15 years of documented use of which in the EU are proven and also places a preference on evidence of traditional use over evidence of modern clinical trials. On the other hand, WEU requires substantial scientific experience which has demonstrated its effectiveness and safety and provides a higher level of clinical acceptance[33]. These stringent laws help in making sure that the consumers trust them and enhancing the reliability of the herbal medicines in the EU market[34]. The demanding nature of the approval, however, the high cost and the intricacy of the process is a significant challenge to the small-scale producers and might restrict market entry and some of the herbal products might not be available despite traditional or therapeutic value.

5.3 India (AYUSH Ministry)

India has come a long way to commercialize herbal medicines in the ministry of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy). The key policies include: Standardization and quality control regulatory standards. Research and clinical test efficacy of Ayurvedic and herbal compounds. The promotion of the export of herbal products in the international collaboration. Though the Indian herbal drugs have become more familiar to the world thanks to AYUSH, there are challenges in obtaining the appreciation by the Western regulatory settings due to the various standards of the evidence[35].

Table 2: Literature Summary on Emerging Technologies and Bioactive Compounds in Healthcare

Author Name	Topic Covered	Research Study Title
Tran, N., Pham, B., & Le, L. (2020)[36]	Investigated bioactive compounds in anti-diabetic plants and their contribution to modern drug discovery; integration of traditional herbal knowledge with pharmacology	Bioactive compounds in anti-diabetic plants: From herbal medicine to modern drug discovery
Liu, Y., Zhang, L., Yang, Y., Zhou, L., Ren, L., Wang, F., ... & Deen, M. J. (2019)[37]	Developed a cloud-based framework for elderly healthcare using digital twin technology; real-time patient monitoring and predictive diagnostics	A novel cloud-based framework for the elderly healthcare services using digital twin
Noorbakhsh-Sabet, N., Zand, R., Zhang, Y., & Abedi, V. (2019)[38]	Examined the transformative role of AI in healthcare; enhanced diagnostics, treatment planning, and patient management	Artificial intelligence transforms the future of health care
Vellido, A. (2020)[39]	Discussed the importance of interpretability and visualization in machine learning for medical applications	The importance of interpretability and visualization in machine learning for applications in medicine and health care
Wang, S., Wang, J., Wang, X., Qiu, T., Yuan, Y., Ouyang, L., ... & Wang, F. Y. (2018)[40]	Proposed a blockchain-powered parallel healthcare system; improved data security, privacy, and inter-organizational cooperation	Blockchain-powered parallel healthcare systems based on the ACP approach

6. DISCUSSION

One of the most complex trends in the world health care may be viewed as the introduction of herbal drugs into the modern health care systems. In classical times, traditional medicine has been founded on the therapeutic activity of different cultures basing its basis on herbal preparations that have been used as preventive, curative and supportive health care products. These classical claims have begun to be reinforced in current literature with clinical trials conducted on some of these popular herbs such as turmeric (*Curcuma longa*), ashwagandha (*Withania somnifera*) and ginkgo (*Ginkgo biloba*) and have indicated, to some extent, possess significant therapeutic efficacy. Anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, neuroprotective, stress-modulating, and metabolic regulatory effects have been reported in such herbs and this implies that herbal medicines can be employed as a complementary or alternative therapy especially in chronic disease and lifestyle-related diseases where more specific treatments to these disorders may be limited or associated with side effects.

Nevertheless, irrespective of the promising tendencies, there are several critical problems that do not allow the successful introduction of herbal drugs into the mainstream care. Lack of a high standardization, batch to batch differences and fluctuating regulatory precepts decrease the reliability and reproducibility of herbal preparations. Large scale clinical support is also lacking in comparison to synthetic drugs that in turn is enhanced by fear of herb and drug interactions which in turn inhibits the application of this approach by the medical practitioners. There is also the disadvantage of international acceptance and standard practice due to the differences in the regulatory framework in varied countries. All these facts support the concept that though the idea of herbal medicines has a massive potential, their further application requires a methodological scientific acceptance, a satisfactory quality control, and a policy backing.

6.1 Interpretation and Analysis of Findings:

The information in this review has indicated that the herbal preparations, such as turmeric, ashwagandha, and ginkgo, possess measurable therapeutic effects that have undergone pre-clinical research, clinical trials and epidemiological research studies. These findings show that the era of herbal medicines as a mythical traditional medicine has come to an end and can be subjected to scientification to play a role in treatment of inflammation, stress, cognitive deterioration, and metabolic disorders. It is noteworthy that not all herbs and conditions have equally strong evidence: some of them, including turmeric, are characterized by a strong RCT evidence, and some, including ginkgo, are characterized by mixed evidence, which implies that certain specific studies are necessary.

According to an integrative approach of healthcare, it is found that an herbal medicine may be used as a supplement to conventional medicine particularly in chronic and lifestyle conditions under which the chronic effects of pharmacological treatment may be restricted or cause adverse effects. However, variability in bioactive contents, production techniques and regulatory measures implies that reproduction and generalisation cannot be done and unless it is systematically done, it may lower the clinical plausibility. Overall, it has been indicated that despite the promising future of herbal medicines, the best way to introduce them into the mainstream healthcare system is to create an interface between the traditional knowledge and scientific validation, as well as standardization and harmonization of regulations.

6.2 Implications and Significance

The application of herbal medicines has a number of potential benefits that justify their inclusion in the contemporary healthcare systems. The affordability of healthcare is one of the greatest advantages since these solutions are usually more available and affordable, and they are particularly useful in low- and middle-income nations where people may not have access to modern medication. Moreover, the integration of herbal alternatives in to the mainstream health care systems is a way of enhancing patient-centred and culturally sensitive care because it acknowledges the fact that patients are usually interested in holistic and natural forms of treatment. In addition to affordability and cultural relatability, herbal medicines also increase the number of treatment alternatives, especially in case of chronic diseases like stress, diabetes, neurodegenerative disorders and inflammatory illnesses where the long-term management is critical. These natural substitutes may be used in addition to conventional pharmacotherapy to improve the outcome of the treatments, patient satisfaction, and it can lead to more holistic and inclusive model of healthcare.

6.3 Gaps and Future Research Directions

The development of herbal medicine as a field in the future is pegged on various issues related to urgency and opportunity. Multicentric, large, randomised controlled trials (RCT) are much needed to critically assess the safety, efficacy and dosage regimen of herbal preparations in various populations. Meanwhile, standardization of methods should occur in extraction, formulation and quality management to limit the differences in phytochemical content and to assure similarity in clinical responses. The use of technological advances and innovations, such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and bioinformatics, have the potential of improving pharmacovigilance, providing predictive toxicology, speeding up the discovery of natural compounds, and the scientific validation of traditional knowledge. The harmonization of the international regulations is equally important as world recognized standards and guidelines that not only improve the credibility of clinical standards but also support trade across borders, commercialization, and international cooperation in research. This harmonization is a major move towards the successful incorporation of the herbal medicines into the world healthcare systems.

7. CONCLUSION

Introduction of herbal medicines into the healthcare systems is an important point of contact between the traditional knowledge of centuries ago and evidence based medicine. The herbal medicines like turmeric, ashwagandha and ginkgo have also shown potential functions in the treatment of chronic illnesses, lifestyle diseases, as well as preventive medicine. Nevertheless, their smooth integration into mainstream medical practice is still hampered in a number of aspects including absence of standardization, inconsistent quality control, limited clinical validation, and disjointed regulatory policies even though there is an increasing interest in them world over. To ensure that the herbal drugs get more global recognition and be used widely, there is a pressing necessity to ensure that the anecdotal or community-based use of the herbal drug is transcended and that a sound scientific foundation is established. Connecting indigenous knowledge systems

to the contemporary pharmacological studies can not only increase the level of credibility but also provide assurance of patient safety, efficacy, and sustainability in healthcare delivery.

7.1 Summary of Main Insights and Conclusions

The most important findings of the review are captured in this section. It highlights that herbal medications such as turmeric, ashwagandha, and ginkgo have scientifically proven therapeutic effects in the treatment of chronic illnesses, disorders of lifestyles and preventive disorders. These sources are pre-clinical trials (laboratory studies and animal studies), clinical trials (human testing), and epidemiological studies (population-level studies).

The practical implications of these findings are also mentioned in the conclusion: such herbal drugs are capable of giving holistic and patient-centered care, providing treatment that is focused on the overall health and well being, as opposed to only targeting symptoms. They are also inexpensive and therefore, they are of great use in areas where contemporary medicines are prohibitive or hard to reach.

Nevertheless, the section is also mindful of the hurdles: inconsistency of the bioactive compounds of herbal drugs, the absence of standardized ways of preparation, the inadequacy of clinical validation using large scale trials, and the disjointed regulatory policies. These problems do not favor their broader application in contemporary healthcare.

7.2 Reiteration of the Importance of the Review

This section describes the relevance of the review. It points out that there is need to bridge the gap between the traditional herbal knowledge and modern scientific approaches in order to establish the efficacy along with guaranteeing safety and informing clinical practice.

The review offers ideas on how herbal medicines can be used to improve healthcare delivery, policymaking, and future research based on the analysis of therapeutic effects, clinical evidence, and regulatory provisions. Simply, it supports the assumption that herbal medicines are not merely cultural, they can be clinically valuable, with proper research and control.

7.3 Recommendations

The following section presents some practical steps towards the actualization of the potential of herbal drugs in the contemporary healthcare:

- Interdisciplinary collaboration: Promotes collaboration among clinicians, pharmacologists and traditional medicine experts to integrate modern scientific methods to traditional knowledge.
- Scientific validation: Suggests large-scale clinical trials, pharmacological research and meta-analyses to provide a solid safety and efficacy evidence base.
- Regulatory harmonization: Proposes the establishment of globally uniform frameworks to harmonize quality, safety and labeling and this would enhance credibility and market acceptance.

- Public awareness and education: Public awareness and education promote the provision of information to patients and healthcare professionals regarding safe, ethical and evidence-based use of herbal drugs.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors have no conflicts of interest regarding this investigation**.**

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