



Editorial

Advancing the frontiers of homoeopathy

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Homoeopathy has had its share of ups and downs in its 225 years of existence. Over the years, numerous attempts have been made to criticize it and brand it as a pseudoscience. A great deal of work is going on globally to demonstrate evidence-based scientific homoeopathy as well as to study the application of homoeopathy beyond its traditional uses.^[1] This is the need of the hour; the boundaries for application of homoeopathy must be expanded to include diverse areas – veterinary sciences, agriculture, clinical psychiatry, geriatrics, acute emergencies, and biomolecular research.^[2]

We live in an age where microbial resistance to medically important antibiotics is already a huge concern. The studies reveal that large amounts of “human” antibiotics are being used on plants. Sixty-three tons of streptomycin and 7 tons of tetracycline (both critically important antibiotics in human medicine) are sprayed annually on the rice crop in Southeast Asia alone. It is also suggested that crops may be the potential vehicles for resistant bacteria to enter the human gut, which can further impact antibiotic efficacy in humans.^[3]

Conceptually, homoeopathy can play a greater role in agriculture and hence we need more research in Agro-Homoeopathy.^[2] It can contribute to controlling diseases in plants, thus promoting increased production.^[4] *In vitro* studies conducted in Pune, India reported that homoeopathic medicines have a significant antifungal activity compared to controls in treating the filamentous ascomycete fungi affecting the onion crops^[5] and stigmatomycosis disease in cotton crops.^[6] A study conducted at Kanyakumari, Tamil Nadu, India, to explore the role of homoeopathy in treatment of tomato leaf curl virus disease vectored by the whitefly (*Bemisia tabaci*) in cultivated tomato (*Lycopersicon esculentum*) plants reported significant variations in the growth parameters, especially in height of the plant and fruit weight; yield showed 42.6% greater increase than in the control group and biochemical parameters, especially ascorbic acid content, showed 12.4% greater increase when compared with the control group. Analysis of virus DNA with RT-PCR showed 31.6% greater reduction of viral load when compared to the control group. Statistical analysis of treatments revealed significance at $P < 0.001$.^[7]

Studies also reveal that homoeopathy has a lot to offer in various aspects of agriculture ranging from plant growth^[8] to treating diseases.^[5-8] Studies have confirmed the presence of nanoparticles (NP), of the original drug materials in homoeopathic medicines, suggesting the high possibility that these NPs close to atomic scale can bring about modifications in quantum mechanical properties in biological systems and water structure. Thus, use of homoeopathic medicines can improve agricultural production by improving plant health and prevent and cure diseases, without the extensive use of pesticides that damage the organic life and environment.^[9]

In this issue, we have an original article by Jain *et al.*, which demonstrates the benefits of application of potentized homoeopathic medicines in enhancing plant productivity through a

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placebo-controlled study.^[10] We hope the learning from the article will encourage wide-ranging application of homeopathy in agriculture.

If we are to prove that homeopathic medicine works, an important task would be to study its effect in bringing down the serological markers, thereby demonstrating its efficacy in an evidence-based manner. In the present issue, we have an original article by Biswas, which demonstrates the efficacy of homeopathic medicines in the treatment of gout and in bringing down the serum uric acid levels.^[11]

Mental health is an oft-neglected area of health. Few papers demonstrate the role of homeopathy in the treatment of mental disease, despite the detailed guidelines laid down by Dr Hahnemann in the Organon. The role of homeopathy in complex psychiatric disorders is often questioned. In this issue, we have a case report by Patil, which highlights the role of homeopathy in a complex psychiatric disorder of dissociative fugue. The case report demonstrates how homeopathy can bring changes at the level of the disease expression and at the level of sensitivity and behavior in a case of dissociative fugue.^[12]

Another area where homeopathy is not considered particularly effective is in acute illnesses, especially in the pediatric age group. In this issue, we have an evidence based case report by Mandal *et al*, which highlights Atopic dermatitis in a 2-year-old child treated with individualised homeopathic medicines.^[13]

All the articles in this issue illustrate the diverse areas in which homeopathy is being applied. A lot of diligent and scholarly work is being done in homeopathy; the problem is that the work is not reaching the majority of the profession (especially young students). Many people doing good work, shy away from publishing it; at times stating that doing work is more important, sharing can always happen later. Here, I am reminded of a few lines from the poem titled “*There is no tomorrow*” by the stalwart Korean poet and freedom fighter, Yun Dong-ju. His poems played an important role in Korea’s freedom struggle against Japan. The lines are:

“I search for the new day myself.

When I awake and look around

I find no tomorrow.

Rather I find today

That has already come.

My Folks!

There is no tomorrow”^[14]

It is important to not just diversify our work in homeopathy, but also publish it in a language the scientific community accepts. Reporting, publishing, and disseminating the

advancing frontiers of homeopathy in an evidence-based, scientific manner cannot be pushed for tomorrow – it must be done today so that future generations of homeopaths inherit a better tomorrow.

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