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Medical Tourism: Growth Prospects of AYUSH

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ABSTRACT

Medical Tourism refers to the process of travelling to another country to receive medical care and treatments. Medical tourism is experiencing an extraordinary rise globally, therefore, it is the right time to tap and promote the indigenous methods of Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy (AYUSH) in Indian economy. AYUSH is unique to India and has a great potential to attract medical tourists from around the world. The ability to meet or exceed tourist's expectations and requirements is necessary to ensure growth and sustainability in the medical tourism industry. The paper focuses on the developments in the AYUSH system of medical care and discusses the future prospects of the system in boosting medical tourism and promoting indigenous methods of medicine. Since AYUSH is increasingly becoming popular among medical tourists as well as domestic patients, it offers a great opportunity to grow and develop beyond other medical systems

KEYWORDS: *Ayurveda, AYUSH,Homeopathy, India tourism, Medical tourism,Unani, Yoga*

1.INTRODUCTION

India has been experiencing a continuous trend of growing tourism for a decade. Tourism in India never again, as universally envisioned, comprises of trips to the towns, the monumental landmarks, religious places like temples, forts, markets, and other noticeable yet novel to India kind of spots. What's new in tourism, is one of its latest emerging branches called, Medical Tourism.

In recent years, a factor attracting tourists to India is health care. India is now ready to heal the world. India is among the fastest-growing medical tourism destination in Asia due to lower costs as compared to western economies like the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Western Europe, and North America. Moreover, it is projected that the sector might boost up by 200% by 2020, hitting $9 billion and accounting for a 20% share in the global market (FICCI and IMS Health-India Report, 2019). It is announced the foreign exchange revenue of the medical tourism was standing at ₹1,35,193 crore in 2015, ₹1,54,146 crore in 2016 and ₹1,77,874 crore in 2017 (Ministry of Tourism,2018).

As the economy expands the medical and health care industry, the country is making efforts to make it convenient for the visitors, through advanced facilities, low – cost treatments, less waiting time, skilled and qualified doctors and also the alternative indigenous methods. Bangladesh and Afghanistan are the top two nations from where the greatest number of health visitors landed in 2017 (India Tourism Statistics, 2017). Around 2.2 lakh visitors from Bangladesh and 56,000 from Afghanistan landed in India for medical purposes (ibid). Other source nations from

where an enormous number of medicinal sightseers come to India incorporate Iraq, Yemen, Uzbekistan, Oman, Sudan, Kenya, Maldives, Nigeria, Saudi Arabia and Tanzania; 63 percent of visitors landing in India from Iraq were medicinal explorers; Nigeria, Yemen and Afghanistan are different nations in which the portion of medical tourists out of all coming to India was more than 40 percent (ibid).

India enjoys high credibility of hospitality, wellness, and alternative medicines. The major factors which attract the medical tourists out of their home country to India are cheap medical costs of treatment as compared to developed countries like the United States of America and the United Kingdom, highly standardized and technologically sound equipment and machinery are used, a strong base of well qualified and learned doctors, medical staff and guides making foreign tourists communicate and correlate with them easily. Moreover, the doctors and staff are fluent in English speaking, making patients communicate easily. Easier process of getting a medical visa makes India approachable. Almost no waiting time in the treatments or surgeries and after treatment recovery services like therapies attract the foreign medical visitors. A study by Sajjad (et. al, 2015) states that tourists also tend to combine travel and tourism with their medical visits, hence an attraction to visit India in lower costs and high quality treatments.

India has an unmatched heritage represented by its ancient and age-old traditional treatment methods, such as Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homoeopathy (AYUSH), which have on numerous occasions demonstrated its adequacy for the patients and are currently broadly acknowledged as alternative treatment methods in numerous geographies. In recent times, an ever-increasing number of patients are coming to India to profit by the tried and tested healthcare remedial AYUSH medicines in the blend.

Since AYUSH is increasingly becoming popular among medical tourists as well as domestic patients, it offers a great opportunity to grow and develop beyond other medical systems. Even though the medical system of AYUSH is rapidly becoming popular among domestic patients, not all are benefitting from it. AYUSH is highly popular among the poor and high-income groups than the middle income groups (Shalini Rudra, et.al. 2014). Another study by Amit Sen Gupta (2008) states that the failure of cost friendly treatments in the high end private medical institutes and hospitals, whereas, the cheap treatments in the public institutions are not up to the mark to satisfy the conditions of poor patients.

Ayurveda, a 5000-year old system of natural healing, originating from Vedic culture in India, is not only enjoying its resurgence in the native land but also throughout the world. Siddha and Unani are similar in their comprehensive way to deal with discovering balance between the psyche and body, with the Siddha originating in the southern province of Tamil Nadu, while Unani following its foundations back to the roots of old Greece. The AYUSH industry is currently estimated to be worth $10 billion. Moreover, it is anticipated that the AYUSH industry is prepared to create direct jobs for 1 million people and provide indirect employment to 25 billion by the year 2020 (AYUSH Ministry, 2019).

Promoting AYUSH courses are a great way to encourage the undergraduate doctors and to incorporate modern methods along with indigenous methods and increase the cross-talk interactions between various streams like biomedicines, medical informatics and allied courses. The steps taken by the government to promote and encourage the AYUSH system are a boost towards the growth and development of the medical sector in India. The traditional medical system is needed to be promoted among allopathy doctors as well to enable a better medical sector as a whole. Hence, AYUSH promises a great attraction for medical visitors, therefore helps to increase tourism and the economy's revenue.

Recognizing the growth prospects and future scope of the AYUSH in medical tourism of India, the study explores the opportunities of growth in AYUSH medical sector, the factors responsible for immense shoot up in its popularity and facilities in past few years, reasons why the indigenous methods of medicines be promoted along with its direct and indirect impact on the economy and various major steps taken by the government to promote the methods at domestic as well as global levels in the subsequent chapters. The objective of the paper is to study the current status of progress in the AYUSH industry in terms of financial aids, infrastructural developments, and human resource developments. The paper concludes that there is an immense growth opportunities for the growth and development of the AYUSH medical methods given better facilities, setting up of AYUSH hospitals and colleges in large number, training of doctors and fresh graduates, promoting unconventional AYUSH methods like Siddha and Unani other than Ayurveda, Yoga and Homeopathy systems of medicines. Government also needs to endorse AYUSH methods on domestic as well as global levels to garner wider consumer base and educate foreign people about the ancient Indian medical methods.

2.Medical Tourism and AYUSH

India has been experiencing a steep rise in the trend of medical tourism in past few years. The increased trend of medical tourism has lead the Indian economy to grow in a positive direction. As discussed in the earlier chapter about the reasons for growing medical tourism in India, another medical attraction growing in the recent years are Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy, abbreviated as AYUSH. AYUSH has resulted in increased medical tourist arrivals in last few years and the trend is expected to grow even more in the coming years. Moreover, the Indian economy is expecting a $ 9 million rise in the industry of medical tourism in the years to come. Henceforth, it can be asserted that as the patient count rises for the AYUSH patients from around the world, it leads to rise in the total count of domestic health facilities, and in turn rises the total trend of tourism in India. Medical tourism combined with travel opens up the opportunities for the tourists to come to India. Tourists also tends to combine travel and tourism with their medical visits, hence an attraction to visit India in lower costs and high quality treatments (Rumaiya Sajjad, 2015).

Another reason to promote and encourage the AYUSH medical system is its indirect impact on the overall and wholesome development of the medical services and health industry in India. As the component of the medical system improves, it affects the overall development of the medical industry. Installation of latest technology and medical equipments in the AYUSH sector will automatically compel other medical sectors to improve their installed equipments and upgrade to latest medical technologies and machines. This would have a wholesome growth impact on the medical industry and will improve the domestic health facilities of the country. Better medical care can be easily made available in the local and primary health care institutes to reach a wider range of patients. A study by Amit Sen Gupta (2008) asserts that the failure of cost friendly treatments in the high end private medical institutes and hospitals, whereas, the cheap treatments in the public institutions are not up to the mark to satisfy the conditions of poor patients. Primary health care institutes in the rural areas can be made better with improved technological assistance reaching to the patients. Hence, improving the overall quality of the health services and facilities reaching to wider consumers. Another study by Sunita Reddy (et.al, 2014) explores through the area on accessibility, affordability, and ethics and raises a question if it is sensible to promote medical tourism with poor public healthcare facilities for the public.

As the healthcare services starts to improve, the quality of service providers also tends to improve. The quality of doctors, practitioners, medical staff, and para-medicals staff starts to improve in quality. When the service sector grows and develops to the world class level, the quality of the services starts to improve so as to match up to the

quality of the world level. The economy which provides world class level of facilities at a comparatively cheaper rates, tends to garner more consumers and attract tourists from across the world. Economy's focus and contribution towards the skill development and education about the new technologies and equipments can refine the quality of doctors and practitioners and make them world class ready. There is a need to encourage the doctors towards AYUSH medical system and increase the popularity of the indigenous system. When a large number of doctors and practitioners are inclined towards the indigenous systems like Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Yoga, Naturopathy, and Homeopathy, there is a high probability that these medical systems be accepted at global level and deserves its due credit. The practitioners and the doctors are the only means through which these systems can reach to different parts of the world and be recognized across the countries.

To carry forward the traditional systems of medication, more and more medical students and fresh graduates must be encouraged to participate and pursue their careers in the AYUSH medical courses. The future batches of the medical students can help apply latest technologies and treatment methods in the system and hence, a well skilled and well taught fresh graduate can prove to be a boon for the AYUSH as well as medical industry. There is an increased urgency to introduce indigenous medical methods and AYUSH to the current undergraduates and explore the allied career choices with respect to scopes and opportunities in the field (Janmejaya Samal, 2013). Cross talk between several streams of medical and bio medical studies should be encouraged so that the students develop interests in these methods and pursue their careers in this further (Kishor Patwardhan, 2014). Better quality education combined with better practical knowledge will give rise to a pool of better quality doctors, practitioners, medical staff, and para medical staff.

Above all the reasons to promote AYUSH medical system and medical tourism in India, the major reason for the trend would be the growth of the economy. Tourism industry is rapidly growing its operations worldwide. It is also responsible for direct FDI inflows in the country. Hence, it provides a great platform to promote AYUSH and indigenous medical methods on a global level and make the system more integrating and interactive. Medical tourism industry in India is emerging as a revenue generator for the economy. With the direct FDI earned through tourism and/or medical tourism, it provides opportunity to reinvest the funds and develop the system further to attract more tourists. A study by Anu Rai (et.al, 2014) suggests that India can avail the opportunity to host patients from US, UK, France, Germany and Canada too if the resources in India are tapped efficiently and effectively. However, the government of India has failed in all round development and growth of the medical sector in India. The private sector is far more developed and advanced, but is highly expensive and unapproachable for the poor class. Moreover, private sector is in favor of the elite class, hence, widening the inequality gap between the two classes. Therefore, it can be said that the medical sector in India has a huge potential to capture the health tourism of the world economies and become a source of wealth and investments in the sector.

3.Government Initiatives for AYUSH

The unique potential of the wellness system preserved and developed through centuries of shrewdness of the ancient Indian civilization has been successfully tapped and being promoted for further growth. The government is on board with promotion of medical tourism and AYUSH industry with several schemes, programmes, events, etc. as mentioned below:

1) A whole new Ministry for AYUSH has been launched in 2014 with an aim to position AYUSH systems as a preferred system of practice and living to attain a healthy India. It was launched under the Ministry of Health and Family Welfare.

2) National AYUSH Mission (NAM) is a centrally sponsored flagship program, providing easy accessibility of AYUSH facilities through AYUSH hospitals and dispensaries as a part of public health services.

3) The ministry has also indulged in international co-operations to widen the reach of AYUSH systems. The ministry has signed Country to Country Memorandum of Undertaking with Cuba, Equatorial Guinea, Kanagawa Prefectural Government of Japan, and Plurinational State of Bolivia. Ministry also facilitated research collaboration with institutes between India and USA, Austria and Tazakistan. The ministry deputed delegation abroad to Switzerland, USA, UK, Japan, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Iran, China, Belgium, Netherlands, Surinam, Indonesia, Brazil, Myanmar, Germany for various events to extend the reach of AYUSH systems.

4) Amendments in the Education Policy of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani (ASU) Systems to increase admission capacities.

5) Scheme of Ayushman Bharat was launched in 2017 with a vision to promote "self care" to reduce the disease burden and expenditures.

6) National health Policy was launched in 2017 through which establishment of AYUSH Wellness Centers under AYUSHMAN Bharat have been proposed in guidelines of National AYUSH Mission (NAM).

7) International Yoga Day was globally celebrated since June 21, 2015 with a vision to encourage and promote Yoga globally.

8) The Ministry has setup institutes under AYUSH to facilitate research and studies across the country. The institutes are as follows:

   - North Eastern Institute of Folk Medicine, Arunachal Pradesh
   - All India Institute of Ayurveda, Delhi
   - Institute of Post Graduate Teaching & Research in Ayurveda, Gujarat
   - National Institute of Ayurveda, Rajasthan
   - North Eastern Institute on Ayurveda & Homeopathy, Meghalaya
   - Rashtriya Ayurveda Vidyapeeth, Delhi
   - National Institute of Siddha, Tamil Nadu
   - National Institute of Homeopathy, West Bengal
   - National Institute of Unani Medicine, Karnataka
   - Morarji Desai National Institute of Yoga, Delhi
   - National Institute of Naturopathy, Maharashtra

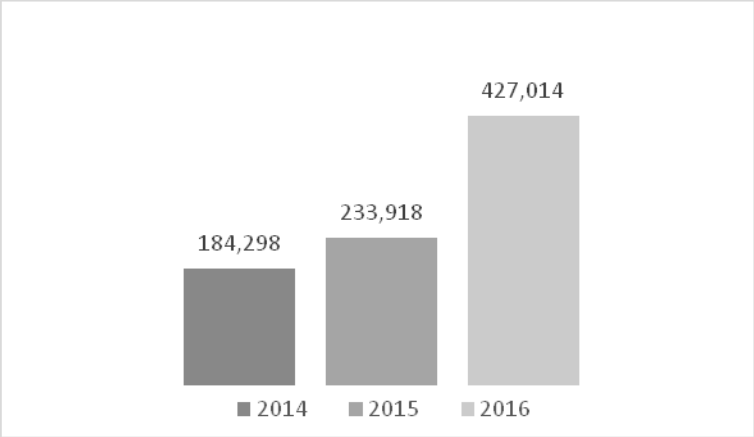
9) The Ministry offers financial aids as Marketing Development Assistance for Publicity and for organizing Wellness and Medical Tourism Promotion shows as well as workshops/events/seminars to accredited Medical and Wellness Tourism Service Providers and Chambers of Commerce, etc.

10) Medical and Medical attendant visa has been introduced to streamline and ease the travel process of Medical Tourists. The e-tourist visa regime has also been expanded to include medical visits as well.

The government of India is perpetually focusing on the development and promotion of AYUSH health system along with medical tourism at global level to extend the reach of unique indigenous system of wellness system of Ayurveda, Unani, Yoga, Homeopathy, Siddha, and Naturopathy worldwide. The ability to meet or exceed tourist's expectations and requirements is necessary to ensure growth and sustainability in the medical tourism industry.

4.DATA INTERPRETATION

AYUSH is one of the potential factors to increase the medical tourism, or for that matter increase the tourism in India. Hence, the government is perpetually focusing on the growth and development of the medical sectors and AYUSH system.



Source: Ministry of Tourism (2018)

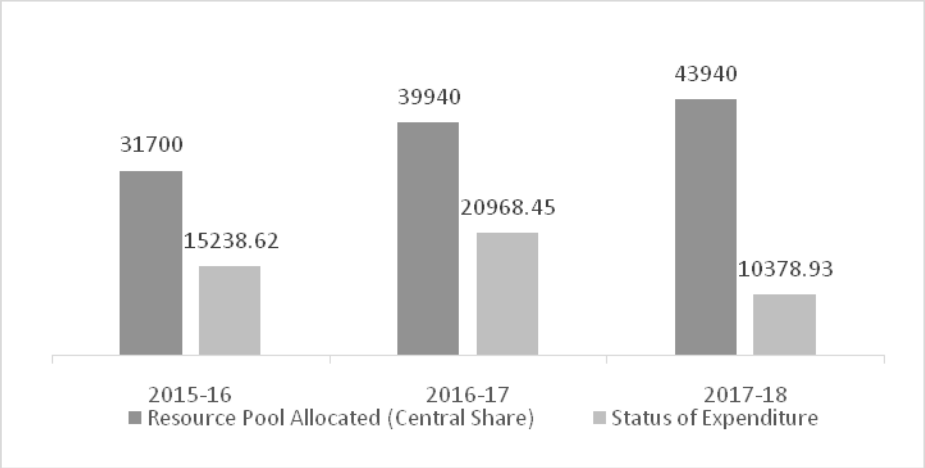
FIGURE 1: Foreign tourist arrivals in India for medical purpose (2014 – 2016)

The Fig. 1 shows rising trend of the tourist arrival for medical purposes to India during the period of 2014 to 2016. The number of medical visas were accepted for around 184298 patients, while it grew by 49620 patients reaching the count of 233918 health tourist arrivals. The following year of 2016 witnessed a tremendous growth trend of 427014 medical tourist arrivals, which grew three folds by 193096 unit count of health tourists.Hence, the medical industry is at an advantageous stage to tap and grow the AYUSH medical systems and promote tourism at global levels. The current chapter interprets the numbers showing the status and progress of the steps taken in the direction across last few years.

4.1FUNDING AND FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE

The foremost step to help an industry grow is to provide the industry with ample funds for its development and promotions. The government of India has been allocating funds to Ministry of AYUSH since its launch in 2014. Fig. 2 shows the funds allocated and expenditure status of the funds across all states and union territories under the program of National AYUSH Mission (NHM). Figure shows that the expenditure of the funds have consistently lower than the fund allocated for the operations. It may depict the inefficiency of the system to effectively utilize the

funds designated to them. Although the funds allocated and disbursed by the government is in huge numbers but the expenditure on the improvement of the system is low by huge margins. The funds allocated in 2015-16 were 31,700 lakhs, but the expenditure were accounted to be around 15,238 lakhs. Similarly, the funds allocated in year 2016-17 and 2017-18 were 39,940 lakhs and 43,940 lakhs respectively; while the expenditures were accounted to be around 20,968 lakhs and 10,378 lakhs respectively.



Source: Ministry of AYUSH (2018)

FIGURE 2: The status of the fund allocated and utilized by the States/UTs under National AYUSH Mission (NAM) (in Lakhs)

Apart from allocating funds to each states for the AYUSH missions, the government also financially assisted the AYUSH care centers to promote the indigenous medical method and encourage more and more people to be benefitted from it. Table 1 shows the number of AYUSH wellness centers assisted financially since 2015 under the National Health Mission.

TABLE 1: AYUSH Wellness Centers assisted under National AYUSH Mission (2015-19)

States/ UTs	2015-16	2016-17	2017-18	2018-19
Andaman & Nicobar	3	3	3	6
Andhra Pradesh	9	0	12	13
Arunachal Pradesh	1	1	1	3
Assam	2	10	0	0
Bihar	0	0	0	0
Chandigarh	3	0	2	0
Chhattisgarh	10	12	0	12
Dadra & Nagar Haveli	0	0	0	0
Daman & Diu	2	2	0	2
Delhi	4	0	0	0

Goa	4	4	4	4
Gujarat	5	6	12	0
Haryana	10	0	0	0
Himachal Pradesh	31	14	4	0
Jammu & Kashmir	2	12	12	0
Jharkhand	1	0	0	0
Karnataka	0	0	0	0
Kerala	10	2	14	15
Lakshadweep	0	1	0	0
Madhya Pradesh	31	31	0	0
Maharashtra	0	0	19	0
Manipur	3	3	4	8
Meghalaya	0	0	0	0
Mizoram	5	3	0	20
Nagaland	3	4	4	4
Odisha	34	14	16	16
Puducherry	1	1	1	1
Punjab	2	0	0	0
Rajasthan	0	295	0	0
Sikkim	0	0	0	0
Tamil Nadu	9	17	40	38
Telangana	4	5	16	22
Tripura	5	5	0	0
Uttar Pradesh	17	42	41	50
Uttarakhand	0	0	8	0
West Bengal	0	0	3	0
TOTAL	**211**	**487**	**216**	**214**

Source: Ministry of AYUSH (2019)

Table 1 shows the number of AYUSH wellness centers financially assisted by the government during last three years, i.e. from 2015 to 2019 across the states in India. In year 2015-16, Odisha has highest number of AYUSH centers assisted with 34 centers, followed by Himachal Pradesh and Madhya Pradesh with 31 centers each; while the total centers assisted in the year stands to be 211. In the following year, i.e. 2016-17, Rajasthan accounts for highest number of AYUSH centers assisted being at 295, followed by Uttar Pradesh with 48; while the total sum of 487 wellness centers being financially assisted in the year. In the year 2017-18, Uttar Pradesh accounts for maximum number of centers assisted, standing around 31 centers, followed by Tamil Nadu with 40 centers; while total assisted centers of the year being 216. Uttar Pradesh again stands with maximum number of centers assisted with 50, followed by Tamil Nadu with 38 centers, and summing the total number to 214 of assisted centers for the year.

TABLE 2: Status of Naturopathy Centers assisted State/UT-wise under National AYUSH Mission (Rs in lakhs) (2019)

	2016-17		2017-18		2018-19	
States/UTs	**Units**	**Amount**	**Units**	**Amount**	**Units**	**Amount**
Andaman & Nicobar Island	0	0	0	0	1	12.9
Chandigarh	0	0	1	12	0	0
Jammu & Kashmir	2	24	0	0	0	0
Kerala	1	12	1	12	1	15.15
Tamil Nadu	12	169.2	27	323.8	34	285.6
TOTAL	**15**	**205.2**	**29**	**347.8**	**36**	**313.65**

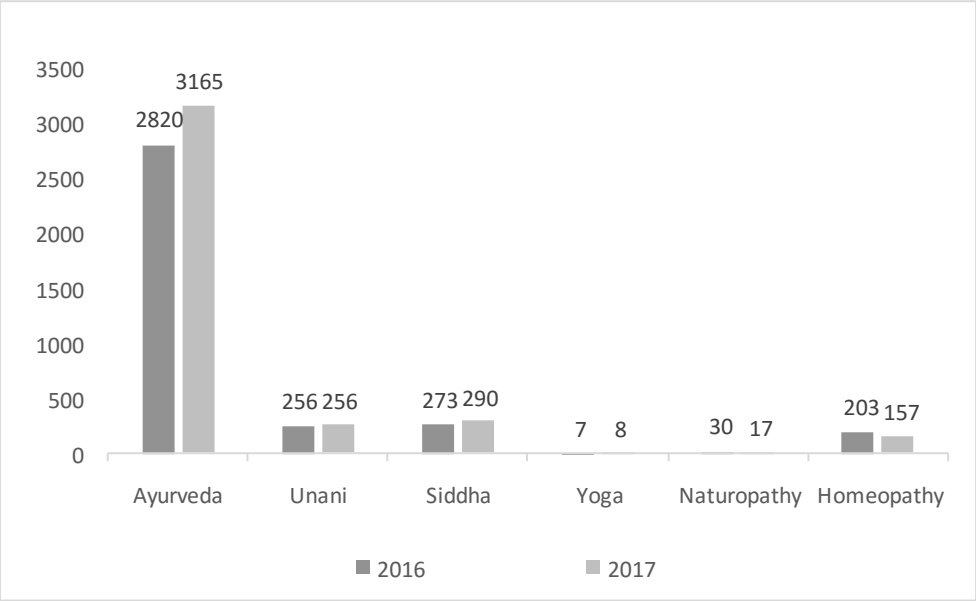
Source: Ministry of AYUSH (2019)

Along with the funding and financial assistance to the program and wellness centers, the government has also funded the naturopathy centers for improvements and promote and popularize naturopathy treatments among patients. Table 2 shows the status of naturopathy centers assisted under National AYUSH Mission across five states, giving the number of units and the amount assisted during the years 2016, 2017 and 2019.

Table 2 depicts that in the year 2016-17, 15 naturopathy centers have been assisted, with 12 centers belonging to Tamil Nadu, followed by Jammu and Kashmir with 2 centers and Kerala with 1 center. The total amount of assistance is 205.2 lakhs for the year 2016-17. In the following year i.e. 2017-18, Tamil Nadu again has the highest number of naturopathy centers assisted i.e. 27, with assistance amount being 347.8 lakhs. In the year 2018-19, total amount of assistance has been summed at Rs.313.65 lakhs with highest amount being for Tamil Nadu with 34 centers, followed by Kerala with Rs.15.15 lakhs for 1 center.

4.2INFRASTRUCTURE

For the betterment of the AYUSH medical system and improvement in the facilities, the infrastructural developments are also necessary. Better infrastructure facilities lead to better quality services and wide population reach of the system. The following fig. depict the status of infrastructural developments in the AYUSH and medical systems. Fig. 3 shows the unit count of AYUSH hospitals in the year 2016 and 2017, which includes ayurveda, unani, yoga, siddha, naturopathy, and homoepathy.



Source: Ministry of AYUSH (2016, 2017)

FIGURE 3: Number of AYUSH Hospitals (2016, 2017)

Fig. 3 shows the cumulative unit counts of the AYUSH hospitals for the year 2016 and 2017. The graph highlights that number of Ayurveda hospitals have increased by 345 units, Unani hospitals remained same in the unit count, Siddha hospitals increased by 17 units, Yoga increased by 1 unit; while Naturopathy and Homeopathy hospitals fell in unit count by 13 and 46 respectively.

Apart from increasing the unit count of AYUSH hospitals, government has also initiated to increase the word count of AYUSH dispensaries across states of India. Table 3 shows the unit count of AYUSH dispensaries across the states for the year 2016 and 2017 for Ayurveda, Unani, Yoga, Siddha, Naturopathy and Homeopathy.

TABLE 3: Number of AYUSH Dispensaries as in 2016 and 2017

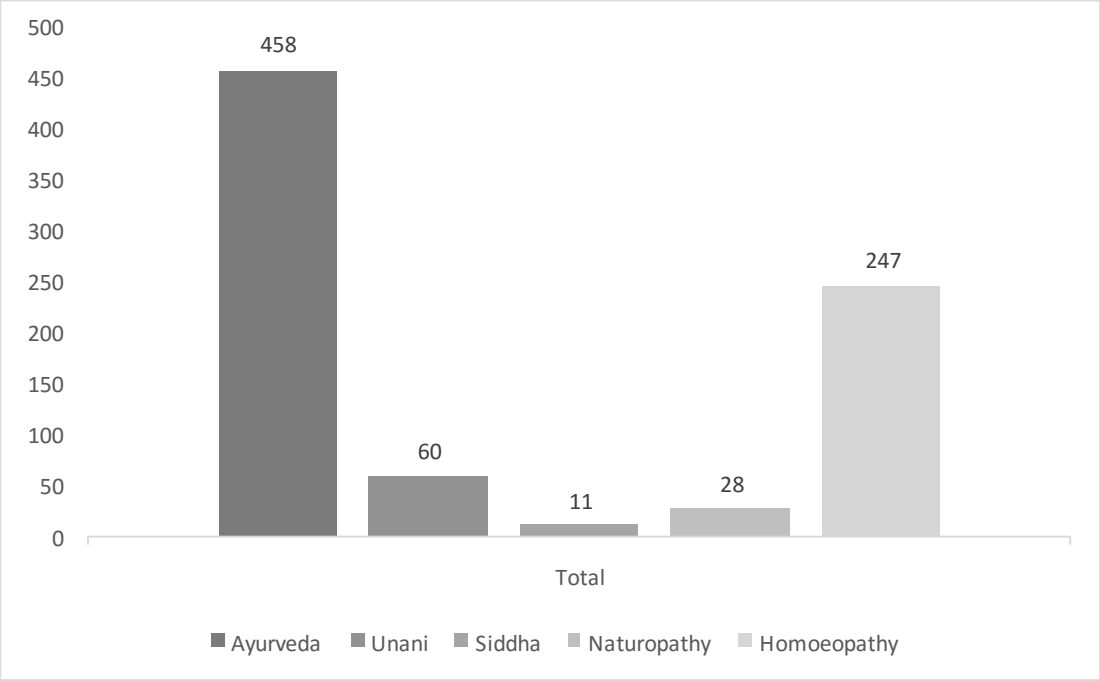
	Ayurveda		**Unani**		**Siddha**		**Yoga**		**Naturopathy**		**Homeopathy**	
States	**2016**	**2017**	**2016**	**2017**	**2016**	**2017**	**2016**	**2017**	**2016**	**2017**	**2016**	**2017**
Andhra Pradesh	333	467	75	112	0	0	0	0	0	20	193	266
Arunachal Pradesh	17	17	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	95	95
Assam	380	380	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	75	75
Bihar	1082	1082	449	449	0	0	0	0	0	0	644	644
Chhattisgarh	956	956	26	26	0	0	0	0	0	0	112	112
Delhi	37	40	19	20	0	0	0	0	0	0	101	103
Goa	11	99	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	83
Gujarat	555	560	0	0	0	0	16	16	14	14	216	216

Haryana	483	483	19	19	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	22
Himachal Pradesh	1112	1150	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	14	14
Jammu & Kashmir	240	240	177	117	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Jharkhand	220	220	54	54	0	0	0	0	0	0	92	92
Karnataka	592	592	50	50	0	0	0	0	5	5	43	43
Kerala	807	806	2	1	6	6	0	0	1	1	661	659
Madhya Pradesh	1496	1496	64	64	0	0	0	0	0	0	213	213
Maharashtra	466	466	25	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Manipur	36	0	15	0	0	0	17	0	13	0	201	1
Meghalaya	6	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
Mizoram	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	22	22
Nagaland	109	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	93	1
Odisha	624	624	9	9	0	0	35	35	30	30	638	638
Punjab	489	489	35	35	0	0	1	1	0	0	111	111
Rajasthan	3577	3577	120	120	0	0	0	0	3	3	252	252
Sikkim	2	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	9	9
Tamil Nadu	96	97	63	64	773	784	104	121	0	0	105	106
Tripura	36	36	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	73	73
Uttar Pradesh	340	2104	49	49	0	0	0	0	0	0	1575	1575
Uttarakhand	142	142	3	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	60	60
West Bengal	502	502	3	7	0	0	0	0	0	0	2020	1520
Andaman & Nicobar Island	11	13	0	0	0	0	2	2	0	0	19	18
Chandigarh	10	10	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10
Dadar & Nagar Haveli	8	10	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	10
Daman & Diu	6	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	6
Lakshadweep	8	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	7	7
Puducherry	27	27	0	0	24	24	4	4	0	0	17	17
Telangana	426	418	188	183	1	1	0	0	28	28	199	196

Source: Ministry of AYUSH (2016, 2017)

Table 3 shows the unit count of the AYUSH dispensaries across the states of India. Ayurveda dispensaries have been increased by 1,884 units, Unani dispensaries have been more or less the same unit with a slight increase by 22 units. Siddha dispensaries have shown increment by 11 units, while Yoga dispensaries have been stagnant at 179 units. Naturopathy dispensaries have shown a slight increase by 6 units, whereas Homeopathy dispensaries have a fall by 651 units.

Educating the staff, para-medical team, doctors and student is important to grow the medical sector. Government has also been successful in opening colleges for students who wish to pursue doctorate in AYUSH medical sciences. Table 4 shows the number of colleges for Ayurveda, Unani, Siddha, Naturopathy and Homeopathy across the states of India for the year 2017.



Source: Ministry of AYUSH (2017)

FIGURE 4: Number of AYUSH Colleges/Institutes in India (2017)

The Fig.4 depicts the unit count of AYUSH colleges and institutions existing across India in the year 2017, with total unit count of all the colleges and institutions being 804. The unit count for the Siddha is the least with only 11 colleges, followed by 28 colleges of naturopathy. Hence, the unit count of colleges and institutions for siddha and naturopathy needs to be increased.

4.3HUMAN RESOURCE

For any services sector to grow and flourish, it is important for the sector to be backed by a very strong and skilled workforce. Hence, human resource is a major factor contributing towards the growth of any sector. The human resource engaged in the AYUSH medical industries is shown in Table 5 below.

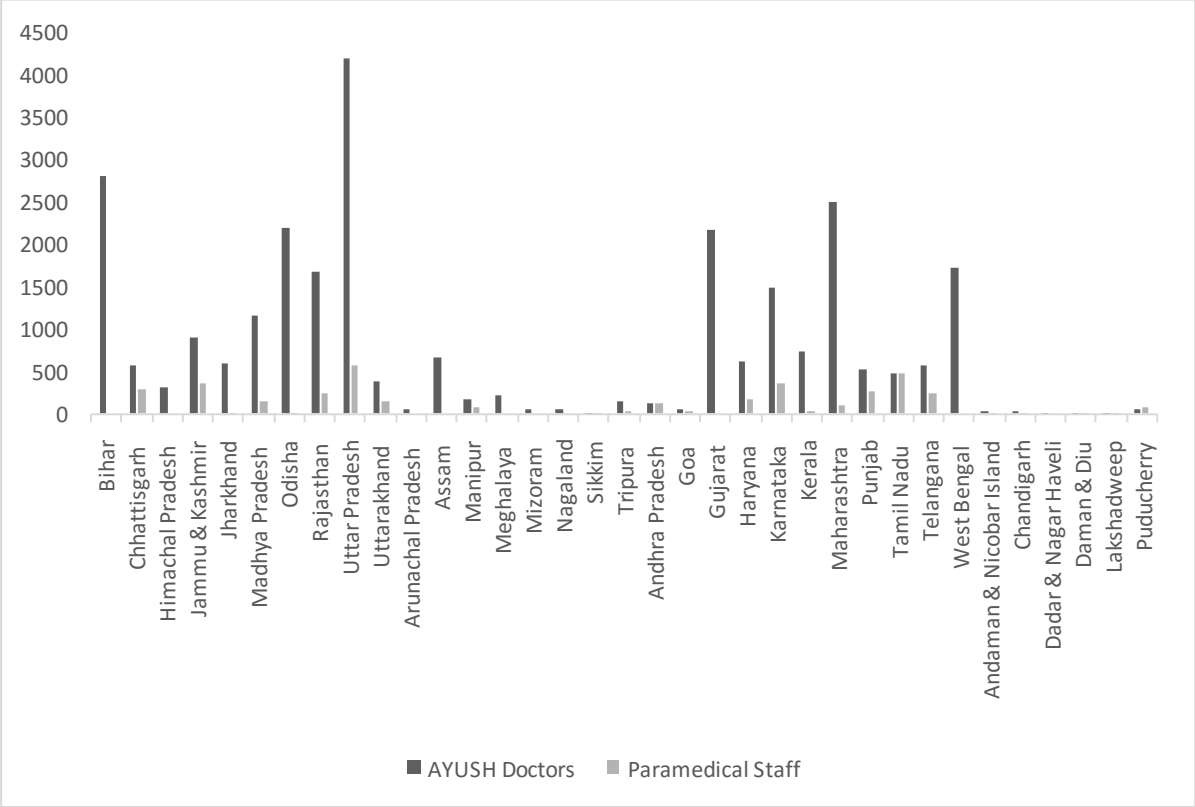
TABLE 5: AYUSH Registered Practioners (Doctors) (2017, 2018)

	Ayurveda		Unani		Homoeopathy		Total	
States/UTs	**2017**	**2018**	**2017**	**2018**	**2017**	**2018**	**2017**	**2018**
Andhra Pradesh	15921	15921	702	702	5247	5247	21933	21870
Arunachal Pradesh	44	55	2	1	293	336	339	392
Assam	1002	1080	0	0	1160	1160	2162	2178
Bihar	96841	96841	7123	7123	31992	32506	135956	136470
Chandigarh	0	0	0	0	156	165	156	165
Chhattisgarh	3430	3430	148	148	1824	1927	5504	5505
Delhi	3421	4661	2011	2570	4827	4965	10259	12196
Goa	636	668	0	0	671	714	1307	1382
Gujarat	26311	26716	321	327	21455	22930	48087	49973
Haryana	8351	8319	268	216	5605	5586	14224	14121
Himachal Pradesh	4975	10338	0	0	1233	1283	6208	11620
Jammu & Kashmir	2937	3123	2498	2596	388	410	5823	6129
Jharkhand	147	219	30	54	285	538	462	811
Karnataka	33869	35886	1948	2074	9102	9450	45668	47410
Kerala	24076	25142	108	118	13156	13847	39144	39107
Madhya Pradesh	46486	46981	1685	1783	16711	18284	64897	67048
Maharashtra	76465	79200	6833	7000	64538	66947	147836	153147
Meghalaya	0	0	0	0	334	368	334	368
Nagaland	0	0	0	0	2084	143	2084	143
Odisha	4846	4874	25	26	9645	9825	14516	14725
Punjab	11135	11374	211	211	4411	4411	15757	15996
Rajasthan	9726	9762	983	983	7810	8063	18563	18808
Tamil Nadu	4357	4357	1182	1182	5075	5596	18246	11135
Telangana	10937	10937	4764	4762	4809	4911	20824	20612
Tripura	0	0	0	0	331	447	331	447
Uttar Pradesh	36626	37262	13423	13884	33425	34343	83474	85489
Uttarakhand	2806	3117	129	133	726	823	3661	4073
West Bengal	3503	3503	5172	5215	37178	38231	45853	46949
TOTAL	**428884**	**443704**	**49566**	**51110**	**284471**	**293455**	**773668**	**788269**

Source: Ministry of AYUSH (2017, 2018)

Table 5 shows the unit count of the registered AYUSH practitioners/ doctors across the states for the year 2017 and 2018. The cumulative unit count of the Practioners/ doctors have increased from 7,73,668 to 7,88,269 from 2017 to 2018. That shows the increment by 14,601 practitioners/ doctors. The least number of unit count of doctors is for the Unani medical system, and maximum in the Ayurveda medical system.

With a strong base of doctors and practitioners, there needs to be another strong team of medical and para-medical staff. Table 6 shows the number of AYUSH staff members under National Health Mission (NHM) for the year 2018.



Sources: Ministry of AYUSH (2018)

FIGURE 5: AYUSH and Paramedical staff under NHM (2018)

Fig. 5 shows the number of AYUSH staff and para-medical staff all over India. The AYUSH staff stands at 27,473 units whereas, para- medical staff stands at 3,731 units. Uttar Pradesh has the maximum number of AYUSH staff, whereas, Tamil Nadu has the highest number of Para- medical staff. Also, Tamil Nadu is the only state which has equal unit counts of AYUSH staff and para- medical staff, both standing at 475 units.

Hence, to promote AYUSH system of medicine, all the three aspects i.e. capital/ funding, infrastructure and the human resource has to be strengthened and established so that AYUSH reaches a level of global competition and have a competitive edge over the world health services.

5.SUGGESTIONS

1) Improvements in the basic infrastructure like roads, electricity supply, and water supply etc. for the tourists patients to be comfortable and satisfied during their visit for treatments. Better infrastructure improve the efficiency and utility which creates more attraction for the tourist patients.

2) Increase in the number of abroad events attended for wider reach and integration of AYUSH with global level of medical systems. Marketing is the key to widespread promotions and awareness among the consumers. Branding and marketing is required to aware the people across the globe about AYUSH which has its roots imbibed in India and gives it a competitive advantage over other countries.

3) Promotion of herbal plants and medicines through high level of exports to large number of countries to gain wider consumer base. Promotion through filing more and more patents regarding medical herbs and also promoting it at global level adds to more demand of product and services across the countries.

4) Government must regulate the medical institutes for uniform grading and accreditations for hospitals to build consumer's trust, and must also regulate the norms regarding the frauds registered with the patients. Standardized methods across the hospitals and institutions are necessary so that the patients availing the services be not cheated upon and can build trust for the Indian health care services for foreign health visitors.

5) Government should focus more on quality of teaching in colleges and at the same time government should increase the number of institutes which will produce more number of AYUSH doctors and medical personnel, will improve the quality of services. Better health care infrastructure and better human resources could help the industry to grow and flourish further making it efficient and attractive at a global level.

6) To market the indigenous medical methods of India at a global level and to regulate the issues of corporate health care, a national level regulative body is needed to be setup to keep the process uniform globally. Exports of indigenous herbal products would expand the AYUSH products market across the countries of the world and increase the consumer base, making it a global product and gradually a global medical system.

6.CONCLUSION

India claims a very dominant position for popularity and growth in the tourism industry, enjoying the benefit of tapping the right opportunities to grow in this sector. More than the recreational tourism, the wellness tourism has seen an abrupt and continuous rise in the number. The medical tourists' arrival to India increased by 82.55% from 2015 to 2016, showing a tremendous demand of the Indian medical services. Therefore, it can be said that the medical sector in India has a huge potential to capture the health tourism of the world economies and become a source of wealth and investments in the sector. Medical tourists are increasingly preferring to shift towards indigenous methods of medical care, that being Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, and Homeopathy, abbreviated as AYUSH. India has an unmatched heritage represented by its ancient and age-old traditional treatment methods, such as Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha, Naturopathy and Homoeopathy, which have on numerous occasions demonstrated its adequacy for the patients and are currently broadly acknowledged as alternative treatment methods

in numerous geographies. The government plays a very crucial role in the development and promotion of the medical system to make it recognized globally. The government of India is perpetually focusing on the development and promotion of AYUSH health system along with medical tourism at global level to extend the reach of unique indigenous system of wellness system of Ayurveda, Unani, Yoga, Homeopathy, Siddha, and Naturopathy worldwide. The ability to meet or exceed tourist's expectations and requirements is necessary to ensure growth and sustainability in the medical tourism industry. The steps taken by the government to promote and encourage the AYUSH system are a boost towards the growth and development of the medical sector in India. Hence, the study concludes that the current status of growth and development of the AYUSH method and medical tourism is on a rise, and the growth prospects in the future is also seen to be escalating in a positive direction, however, the growth and development of the indigenous alternative medical system needs to be improved to be able to compete at the global level and be at par with the excellence in the field.

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