

PERCEPTIONS OF INTELLECTUALS AND STUDENTS ON TRADITIONAL MEDICINE: TOWARDS AMALGAMATION OF TRADITIONAL MEDICINE TO SCIENCE CURRICULUM

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Traditional medicines are in great demand because of their efficacy, safety and lesser side effects. World Health Organization (WHO) suggested upgrading traditional medicine in its own countries. Therefore, some WHO member countries have amalgamated the traditional medical knowledge to their school curriculum. However, in Sri Lanka there is no such amalgamation. Therefore, in my research, the perceptions of intellectuals and students towards amalgamation of traditional medicine to the National Science curriculum were investigated. Two hundred and twenty eight individuals were selected for the research including, advanced level students, ayurveda students, intellectuals from education and medical fields. Data were collected using questionnaires and semi structured interviews. There were four types of questionnaires for the four different study groups mentioned above. Minitab statistical package was used to analyse data. Content analysis and thematic analysis were used for qualitative data, while correlation analysis, regression analysis, paired T tests and Graphical analysis methods for quantitative data. Thirty percent and 49 % of G.C.E. A/L and Ayurveda students respectively have not selected ambitions related to traditional medicine due to non-awareness of the field, while 19 % and 45 % respectively lacked the interest on the field. Prior attitudes of the Ayurveda students have changed after they have exposed to the traditional medical knowledge. Eighty nine percent of G.C.E. A/L students were willing to learn traditional medicine. Ninety six and 88 percent of the intellectuals in the education and the medical field respectively believed that the traditional medicine has a scientific base. Sixty seven and 69 percent of the intellectuals in the medical and educational field, respectively identified amalgamation of traditional medicine to the Science curriculum as a necessity. There were several recommendations and suggestions given by the intellectuals to make the science curriculum to support in developing positive attitudes and basic knowledge on traditional medicine.