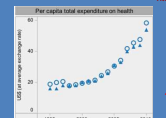


MEDICINE(S) AND SCIENCE(S) IN THE GLOBALISED ERA: THE CASE OF WESTERN VS. INDIAN TRADITIONAL MEDICINE AS REPRESENTED ON THE WEB

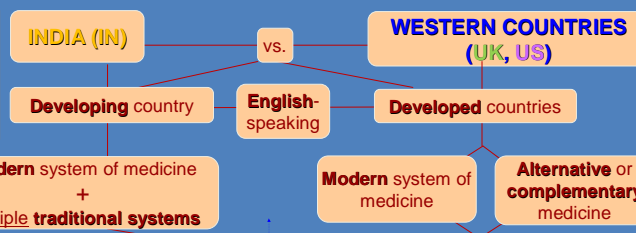
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Source: WHO – Global Health Observatory
<http://www.who.int/countries/india/>



Source: WHO – India: Health Profile
<http://www.who.int/gho/countries/ind.pdf>



Country	Total Health Exp. as % of GDP		Government Exp. on Health as % of Total Exp. on Health	
	2004	2005	2004	2005
USA	15.4	15.2	44.7	45.1
Germany	10.6	10.7	76.9	76.9
France	10.5	11.2	78.4	79.9
Canada	9.8	9.7	69.8	70.3
Japan	8.1	8.2	86.3	87.1
Spain	8.8	7.9	54.1	44.1
Mexico	6.5	6.4	46.4	45.5
China	4.7	4.7	38.0	38.8
Malaysia	3.8	4.2	58.8	44.8
Indonesia	2.8	2.1	34.2	46.6
Thailand	3.5	3.5	64.7	63.9
Russia	2.2	2.1	19.6	19.5
Sri Lanka	4.3	4.1	45.6	46.2
Bangladesh	3.1	2.8	28.1	29.1
Nepal	5.6	5.8	26.3	28.1
India	5.0	5.0	17.3	19.0

Source: WHO, National Health Account, India
http://www.who.int/nha/country/india_nha_2004-05.pdf

- Their representation on the web?
- Any reciprocal influence?
- Credentials?

Method for text analysis derived from:



IN <http://mohfw.nic.in>
Ministry of Health and Family Welfare

- Poor contents and website structure
- Little information
- Only a few webpages
- Most formal documents > intra/intra-specialist > distance from users
- Homepage > text only, few or no visuals > all official, formal pictures > some distance from users
- Spelling mistakes > inaccuracy > despite formality, here formal/surface aspect neglected
- Meeting of State Health Secretaries and Mission Directors, NRHM, 7-8
- Clarification and consolidated list of empanelled hospitals under CGHS
- Expression of Interest for

UK <http://www.nhs.co.uk>
National Health Service

- Inter / Intra-specialist level: Documents / guidelines only available for download (in .doc or .PDF), not on HTML pages > implies voluntary retrieval action is necessary
- Popular level: patient feedback on alternative therapies, health encyclopedia A-Z and live well section
- Overall balance between formal and informal communication > strong focus on didactic, user-friendly, interactive materials at popular level

US <http://www.hhs.gov>
Health Department of Human Services

- Department of AYUSH (Ayurveda, Yoga, Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy, created in 1995, renamed in 2003) > Rich in contents / webpages Modern > Pro-active
- More captivating, user-oriented material with pictures available in HTML pages Popular / didactic level
- Photos of international trade exhibitions > Traditional Indian medicine's image to export globally?
- (Over)abundance of documents/projects on AYUSH research > Trying to put on an official, standard and globally accepted face?
- Among governmental policies > mainstreaming AYUSH in national health care > standardisation of traditional medicine
- Lots of AYUSHA practitioners registered in national health care system

US <http://www.hhs.gov>
Health Department of Human Services

- Alternative medicine not in the homepage > BUT at deeper levels > different genres / specialisation levels / registers > Construction of credentials at diverse levels?
- News release
- Agreement and regulations on health diplomacy
- Letter feedback by patients
- Testimony on cancer experiments
- Blog with info on vegetarianism
- Dedicated section > alternative therapy for specific conditions / diseases
- Text only, few or no visuals > more formal, not didactic BUT involves users and construct credentials through many (new) webgenres

Table 1

	IN	UK	US
traditional medicine	0	789	535
alternative medicine	0	99	1500
complementary medicine	0	455	455
complementary therapies	0	2320	283
allopathic	2	3	64
acupuncture	0	96	96
chiropractic	0	96	72
herbal	1	42	8
vegetarian(s)	0	435	78
diet	0	196	17
massage	0	258	89
allopathic	3	0	20
ayurveda	3	0	1
siddha	3	0	0
unani	3	0	0
naturopathy	3	0	5
yoga	0	237	77

Conclusions

INDIA

- Modern medicine section not very accurate (mistakes), poor visuals, not user-oriented
- AYUSH section accurate, detailed, rich visuals & contents, user-oriented
- Traditional medicine seems rooted, followed, to give credit to modern medicine
- AYUSH and globalization: trade fairs, internationalization, image India send out to world?

UK

- Traditional/alternative medicine > in treatment and conditions / in patient feedback but also in guidelines for practitioners (from WHO)
- Traditional medicine to be found only through search engine: does it still have to gain credit?
- Credit to be obtained through patient interaction: comments, posts, opinions, etc.
- Traditional medicine communicated with balance between intra/intra-specialist and popular level, many visuals, simple and clear language
- Some forms of holistic medicine are accepted, but especially to improve life style (vegetarianism, massages etc.)

US

- Traditional medicine to be found only at deeper layers of the HHS website
- Credentials are built by means of many diverse webgenres (blogs, letters, testimonies, news) at the popular and specialised level
- More formal than UK website: text only, no visuals, more formal

INDIA, UK, US share

- strong focus on research in and experimenting on alternative medicine

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