

Chapter 3

The Scientific Communication Process in Homoeopathic Toxicology: An Evaluative Study

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ABSTRACT

The present chapter evaluates the growth of literature of Toxicology in Homoeopathy. The Scopus database is used as source for the study. Data pertaining to toxicology in homoeopathy for the period 1963 to 2017 is retrieved and analyzed. The study reveals that toxicology literature grows rapidly in the later stages than in the earlier period. The United States of America is the leading contributors at the global level and India is in second position. Among the contributors, E.J. Calabrese, Professor of Toxicology, University of Massachusetts is the most prolific author for Toxicology in Homoeopathy literature. University of Kalyani and University of Massachusetts are the leading institutions, majority of the records are published in the journal 'Homoeopathy', which is published from the USA and major contributions are in the subject domain 'medicine' (65.4 per cent). Most frequently repeated keywords in toxicology of homoeopathy literature are: homoeopathy, humans, non-human, unclassified drug and animals.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-6684-3546-5.ch003

INTRODUCTION

The concept of homoeopathy was first introduced Dr. S. Samuel Hahnemann (1755-1843), a German based physician and a medical degree holder in Allopathy. He has produced all the symptoms of intermittent fever (malaria) but to a mild degree and without the characteristic rigors of that disease while studying the regular doses of *cinchona*. This led *Hahnemann* to an idea which was published in 1796 as Essay on a *New Principle for Ascertaining the Curative Power of Drugs*, which was followed in 1810 by his famous work *The Organon of the Healing Art* (Gevitz, 1993). Hahnemann believed that if a patient had an illness, it could be cured by giving a medicine which, if given to a healthy person, would produce similar symptoms of that same illness but to a slighter degree. The principles followed for proving is '*Similia similibus curentur*', the Latin phrase meaning "let likes be cured by likes," is the primary principle of homeopathy, called 'principle of similars'. To achieve this, Hahnemann diluted his medical preparations to such an astonishing extent that if one assumes that that the substance he employed was completely soluble, by only the fourth dilution the ratio of the medicine to the solution would be 1:100 000 000. Homeopathic drugs are prepared by a process called homeopathic dilution in which the substance is diluted repeatedly in alcohol or distilled water.

Followers of Hahnemann founded the first homeopathic medical school in the United States in the late 1800's is American Institute of Homeopathy (Loudon, 2006). It gained recognition because of its success in treating the many disease epidemics rampant at the time - including scarlet fever, typhoid, cholera and yellow fever. Homeopathy became spectacularly popular in the United States and Europe in the 1800s and its strongest advocates included European royalty, American entrepreneurs, literary giants, and religious leaders. But at the time that it was gaining widespread popularity, it became the object of deep-seated animosity and vigilant opposition from establishment medicine.

The differences between orthodox medicine and homeopathy could hardly be more vivid. Homeopathic treatment always began with a long consultation, lasting at least an hour, in which all aspects of the patient's illness and life were discussed and the appropriate treatment chosen. In contrast, orthodox medicine was immersed in the belief that advances in understanding disease could only come from a detailed correlation of symptoms and signs of the sick patient on the ward, and the findings at autopsy: clinico-pathological correlation.

Hahnemann showed no interest in detailed pathology, and none in conventional diagnosis and treatment. He was only interested in the principles of homeopathic medicine which he used to name the illness. Classical homeopathy was therefore seen by its supporters as an attractively safe system, simple, easy to understand, and centred on the patient as a whole and not on pathological lesions. The fundamental principle of homoeopathy is based on the capability to ascertain the disease producing power of drugs where it proves to be better antidote for diseases with similar symptoms. The homeopathic pharmacodynamics is acquiring knowledge of drugs is through homoeopathic drug proving, laboratory investigations and experiments through carefully conducted experiments, based on the concept that the poisonous substances when used in minute quantity produce final symptoms.

TOXICOLOGY IN HOMOEOPATHY

According to 'Macmillan Encyclopaedia', defines

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