



## RITUALIZING WELL BEING IN AYURVEDA: RESPONSES AND PERCEPTION OF ITS TREATMENT

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### Abstract:

Ayurveda as a practice has a long history. It has gone through several transformations despite being an orthodox category. It resisted change, hence has been transformed multiple times taking different twists and turns from naturopathy to yoga chakra therapy. This has existed from the Vedic tradition to its reinterpretation in nineteenth and twentieth century with Reformist and Revivalist movements. From the times of Buddha to Vivekananda to Ayurveda has been amended transitioned from ancient to radical in terms of wellbeing and lifestyle changes. Defining categories and patterns put forwards the ability to relate variety of responses with objectives of the study. In order to understand impacts of wellbeing provided by the Indian Ayurveda pharmaceutical industry, two perspectives have been covered in the study where interview has been conducted with managerial level executives working at ayurvedic medicine companies and suppliers in the retail market.

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### Introduction

Dhanvantri, an avatar of Vishnu was associated with Ayurveda as was the sovereign God. It meant the Dharma of the king and his duties. This presents in-depth analysis of qualitative data received from interview participants using thematic analysis method. Since health is dynamic it has adopted axial coding approach to categorise responses in accordance to research objectives so that pattern could be created. Every pattern or category has further included relevant codes to interpret data collected and relate it with respective research objectives. Ayurveda is an alternative medicine system with historical roots in the Indian subcontinent. It is heavily practiced in India and Nepal, where around 80% of the population report using ayurveda. The theory and practice of ayurveda is pseudoscientific. The main classical ayurveda texts begin with accounts of the transmission of medical knowledge from the gods to sages, and then to human physicians. Printed editions of the *Sushruta Samhita* (*Sushruta's Compendium*), frame the work as the teachings of Dhanvantari of ayurveda, incarnated as King Divodāsa of Varanasi, to a

group of physicians, including Sushruta . From here, it became a universal concept. Thereupon, Dharmasutras which were the first text to commit themselves completely to the concept of Dharma, extended itself to every part of life (Wikipedia). Everything was ritualised in all kinds of relations in society. The 6-step framework as suggested by Braun & Clark (2006) has been adopted by the researcher to categorize responses and assigning codes. Semi-structured interview has been used to collect data that provided open ended discussion option to receive qualitative data and find out undisclosed information. This study discusses the data collected from these two types of interviewees and further interprets aims and objectives:

- To evaluate impacts of Health on ayurvedic pharmaceutical industry in India.
- How are concepts, and metaphors transformed into techniques of treatment ?
- How do we understand health as a phenomenon and its nature of in ancient Indian society?
- How did ancient medicine manage to assimilate modern day practices into itself?

### **Data and Methodology:**

In this qualitative study, it was always a challenging task to analyze and to interpret data collected as responses received from interview participants from open ended discussions that were made during interview resulted to receive huge volume of data. Sometimes, it was a challenge for the researcher to interpret data as there were contradictory and vague responses that led to have issues in categorizing data under thematic analysis and interpret findings in relation to the research objectives. Responses received from the interview conducted with people working at managerial level at different ayurvedic medicine companies were categorized and assigned with codes as follows:

**Table 1. Categories and Codes developed in relation to Research Objectives**

| Research Objectives   | Categories   | Codes   |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To seek out the impact of SCM in Ayurvedic medicines in India</li> </ul>   | General understanding about SCM and its impacts on Ayurvedic pharmaceutical industry | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perception</li> <li>Significance</li> <li>Acceptance</li> <li>Efficient Delivery</li> <li>Cost</li> <li>Sales</li> </ul> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To determine the factors that lead to the implementation of supply chain management on Ayurvedic medicines in India</li> </ul> | Factors leading companies to implement effective SCM                                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Timely supply of raw material</li> <li>Rising demand</li> <li>Technology</li> </ul>                                      |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To identify the various issues that are related to Supply Chain Management on Ayurvedic medicines in India</li> </ul>          | Issues or challenges related to SCM on ayurvedic medicine companies                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expertise</li> <li>Resource capability</li> <li>Cost</li> </ul>  |

#### 1.1.1. Analysing Responses for Category-1

First category as developed above was aimed to evaluate understanding and significance of supply chain management and to find out its impacts on business performance of ayurvedic medicine companies. First four questions asked in the interview were mainly related to receive data under this category where relevant codes were allotted by the researcher. Three codes *perception*, *significance* and *acceptance* were aimed to evaluate understanding and importance of supply chain management whereas other three codes *efficient delivery*, *cost* and *sales* were

targeted to evaluate impacts of supply chain on business performance of ayurvedic medicine companies. Data collected under this category were directly related to achieve research objective-1. Supply chain management has always been suggested as one of the vital parts to ensure improved organizational performance at every stage of business whether it is manufacturing, wholesale, or retailing. In the context of Indian ayurvedic pharmaceutical industry, supply chain management can be understood as highly significant in today's marketplace from the responses received.

First code '*perception*' was meant to find out level of knowledge and understanding among managerial level people working at ayurvedic pharmaceutical companies about supply chain management and its role in their business. During the interview discussions, it was revealed that all participants were having adequate understanding about supply chain as they relate it with supplying of raw material for production and other key resources to run business smoother. From the responses received from interviewee 1 and 3 as mentioned below, it was clear that they consider supply chain as critical to success of their business as it ensures not only timely delivery of raw material for production, but they indicated effective order management and delivery to traders and end users on time.

#### ***Response from Interviewee-1***

*"...I consider supply chain management as an essential tool to ensure success of a business in ayurvedic medicine industry as everything depends on how efficiently things reach at each stage of the business whether it is manufacturing, wholesale, retailers or stores...it's all about delivering things on time to make consumers happy and satisfied..."*

#### ***Response from Interviewee-3***

*"...supply chain in my viewpoint play a key role for our business as we are into medicine production where timely availability of resources is only possible with efficient supply chain system that we have...."*

*"...supply side and consumer sided, we have a system that helps managing everything at each level of business procurement...."*

Taking it further to determine the importance and implementation level at organizational level, '*significance*' and '*acceptance*' as other two codes were developed where the interview

discussions have revealed that supply chain management plays highly significant role in the Indian ayurvedic pharmaceutical industry as supply of medicines from manufacturing units to end users goes a multilevel system including warehouses, distributors, retailers, company outlets or medical stores to ensure that medicines could be available to end users. An important finding received from interviewee-2 was transparency and relationship between suppliers and the business which can be improved adopting efficient supply system such as lean inventory system or supplier management system. Although supply chain management was found to be crucial in ensuring on time production and delivery managing orders effectively, however, there seems a gap in terms of organizational level acceptance of effective supply chain management system as interviewee 5 has responded that his company has not adopted any new system to manage supply activities.

#### ***Response from Interviewee-2***

*“...as my role is to manage order activities from traders and distributors, I find the importance of effective supply chain system more useful.... I find lean inventory as a key supply chain system that supports establishing transparency and relationship with traders and suppliers.”*

#### ***Response from interviewee 5***

*“...well...personally I think every organization working at multilevel structure must have an effective supply chain system so that orders could be received and given on time maintaining orders... however, still our company follows traditional system rather looking for new supply chain tools which in my point of view a drawback in a competitive market.”*

After getting enough information about significance of supply chain management in ayurvedic pharmaceutical industry, it was important to find out data that could help evaluating impacts of supply chain management in terms of business performance. In this respect, three codes '**efficient delivery**', '**cost**' and '**sales**' were made to relate business performance of the companies using effective supply chain system or tools. From the responses received during interview discussions, it was quite evident that all managerial level people have confirmed that after making changes in existing supply chain system with efficient supply chain systems such as inventory management, order management system and lean inventory systems, companies were

able enough to minimize delivery related challenges. It was revealed that such systems have improved order receiving and customer requesting activities which allowed business to undertake each request on time and thus efficient delivery could be made possible.

Responses received from interviewee 1, 3 and 4 was a key finding to this study where it was revealed that after making significant changes and adopting new supply chain system, business had to make additional investments to integrate different levels of activities into systems however over a period of 2-3 years, businesses were able to reduce cost of production and managing inventory as it was possible to estimate orders to be placed in near months and thus to manage production accordingly. This finding can be related directly as a key impact of supply chain management on ayurvedic medicine companies which helped to reduce costs of managing inventory.

***Response from interviewee 2***

*“...our company was having issues in terms of timely delivery which led top management decide to adopt linked inventory management system that helped to manage orders and thus provided relief to larger extent making it possible to make efficient delivery.”*

***Response from interviewee 4***

*“...numbers of unnecessary costs were removed after implementing new supply chain management system at our business ...no doubt it turned to be a cost saving approach along with managing order.”*

Another finding revealed from the discussion was related to customer request and timely receiving of orders from traders, retailers, and customers. Interviewee-4 has made a valuable point during discussion stating about the increasing role of technology and internet not only at organizational level but at retailers and consumer end also. It was addressed that considering the technological innovation in delivery system, company has made subsequent changes and adopted an electronic supply chain system to make everyone connected with the firm, place order, check status and manage payments. This change was made 3 years back as indicated by interviewee-4 that helped to increase sales level in the last two financial years.

Therefore, above findings remain significant to interpret that supply chain management is vital for Ayurvedic pharmaceutical companies in India providing range of benefits to manufacturers, businesses, traders, retailers, and consumers in relation to manage production, order, and delivery activities. Effective supply chain systems such as lean inventory, inventory management system or order management system are important to improve delivery, reduce costs and maximize sales for ayurvedic medicine companies.

### 1.1.2. Analyzing Responses for Category-2

As discussed in the literature review about the growth of ayurvedic medicine industry in India, it can be understood that manufacturing and retailing organizations are expanding their business and supply not only to Indian markets but also in overseas. Continued research and development in the fields of ayurvedic medicine have led to make this industry as one of the profitable and potential industry for investors. More and more players are joining different levels of the industry. As a result, competition has increased heavily in the industry where businesses are eyeing to adopt new strategies or make changes in existing which could help maintaining healthy relations with suppliers at one end to ensure timely supply of resources and customers at other end to receive continuous orders. This category of the study is linked to research objective-2 that aims to investigate factors that lead ayurvedic medicine companies to implement supply chain management.

When it comes to understand driving factors for implementing supply chain management among ayurvedic medicine companies, interview discussions have revealed *'timely supply of raw material'* as the most important factor where organizations seek to enhance their resource capabilities. Most importantly from ayurvedic medicine manufacturing company's point of view, timely availability of inputs or materials such as herbs, oil, agro materials, etc are crucial to ensure timely production that helps to meet out demand in the market. Effective supply chain has been helpful as mentioned by interviewee 1 and 2 in managing uninterrupted supply of raw material as the company was able to control inventory, orders and accordingly request for raw material supply for production process.

### ***Response from interviewee 1***

*“...being involved into ayurvedic manufacturing, getting raw material on time was our foremost requirement which led us to look for efficient supply system which could bring ease of doing in managing raw material supply and thus ensure uninterrupted production process.”*

### ***Response from interviewee 2***

*“. traditionally, giving orders to suppliers after checking inventory was a real challenge to manage activities at our business however integrating lean inventory system has been phenomenal in managing inventory and raw material as everything is now linked with invoicing and suppliers get informed automatically about the raw material requirement. “*

Another key finding revealed from the interview discussion was similar to literature review finding where interviewee have confirmed about ‘**increasing demand**’ for ayurvedic medicines in Indian and overseas market. While discussion, it was found that people are now more aware about health and wellness and avoid taking allopathic treatment for long term cure. Interviewee-3 and 4 have mentioned that their companies have reported increase in numbers of customers over the last 3 years’ time and majority of them displayed interests to look for ayurvedic medicine for chronic diseases such as diabetes, blood pressure, thyroid, etc. Growing number of research and studies about the importance of ayurvedic treatment for long term cure at low cost and no impacts on body have led to push the demand for ayurvedic medicines. This is where; they confirm that to manage increasing demand and supply in the market, they had to integrate order management and inventory management system as effective supply chain management tools. Thus, rising demand in the market has been another major factor behind growing implementation of supply chain management in ayurvedic medicine industry in India.

### ***Response from interviewee 4***

*“. I think today almost every consumer is connected to internet and mobile applications which played a revolutionary role in Indian marketplace forcing businesses to adopt technological change in existing ways and get connected with end users...”*

*“. giving orders on website or online portal is easy for end users as it saves time and costs which created a demand for efficient supply chain system to ensure timely receiving of orders and delivery to make customers satisfied...”*

Above responses received from interviewee-4 reveal that mobile technology and internet are two important factors which led to implementing supply chain system among businesses in ayurvedic medicine industry in India. From this response, it can be understood that consumers today are more techno savvy where they prefer online shopping or searching for products on online platforms. This is where; a business that is not able to make its presence on online platforms is less competitive and may suffer as poor sales. Therefore, increasing use of '*technology*' led players in the industry adopt technology based or online supply chain management system to manage orders, inventory, and supply.

Therefore, above findings reveal that timely supply of raw material, rising demand and technology that are major factors behind growing implementation of supply chain management among ayurvedic medicine companies.

### 1.1.3. Analyzing Responses for Category-3

Another important area of investigation in this study was to identify issues and challenges in relation to integration and implementation of supply chain management within ayurvedic pharmaceutical industry. To this stage, in-depth discussions with managerial level people working at different ayurvedic medicine companies have confirmed that supply chain management is one of the important business tools that help in managing resource availability, orders, inventory, delivery, and establishing good relations with customers. However, during the interview, it was found that integration or adopting software-based supply chain management system is limited to larger ayurvedic medicine companies those operate at multi location and multi-level structure. From the findings, expertise, cost, resource capability and competition were main identified issues that restrict small to medium level ayurvedic medicine companies causing to low interests for implementing supply chain system.

From the interview responses, '*expertise*' and '*cost*' were advocated as common problems for businesses in ayurvedic medicine industry that restrict them to implement effective supply chain management system or use any software. While discussion with interviewee-2 and 5, it was disclosed that majority of small level to mid-level enterprises within the industry are still using traditional supply chain system instead of technology driven or software-based supply chain management software. Majority of businesses related to Ayurvedic medicines in India are still low investment intensive that makes it challenging for them to integrate software which may cost

huge to such businesses. In addition, managing software-based supply chain systems such as inventory management software, lean inventory tools or supply management software also remain a critical issue as it requires technical expertise to operate the software in effective manner.

***Response from interviewee 2***

*“...it requires additional investment or costs to implement software for supply chain management that makes it challenging for small players in the industry to adopt technology-based software.”*

***Response from interviewee 5***

*“. I think cost and talent both are needed to make supply chain management software run in appropriate manner and provide efficiency to the business...in today’s marketplace, still this remain an issue even though there are number of low-cost software are available.”*

Above responses were enough to understand that cost and expertise required for supply chain management software are two major issues that create restrictions among traders in the ayurvedic medicine industry. Hiring for talent to operate the software require additional ongoing expenditure as salary to expert, software maintenance expenditure and if at any point software does not work, it may hamper overall business activities. These are some common perceptions among businesses in the industry that restrict them to adopt efficient supply chain management system.

In addition, ‘**resource capability**’ was identified as another challenge which no business in ayurvedic industry is looking to get affected with any change in existing business model or processes. There is continuous demand of ayurvedic products, herbs, or plants in Indian and overseas market and where business activities right from production, distribution to customer delivery, businesses operate in a systematic manner. Changing anything new in existing capacity can affect overall business results which remain a challenge for many in the industry not looking to incorporate significant change in existing supply chain management system.

***Response from Interviewee-5***

*“For our business when tried looking for new software to manage inventory and customer orders, we felt real challenges in terms of using complex software ...”*

*“...so many companies are offering software on supply chain that makes decision making tough to find out an efficient software...”*

From the response received from interview-5 as mentioned above, it was revealed that availability of larger number of providers for software-based supply chain system has created competition among them and challenging for users to find out which software is effective and beneficial for the business. In addition, due to multilevel operational functions, adopting new software can affect working of distributors or retailers and their results those may shift to look for selling products of other companies. Increasing level of competition in Indian ayurvedic medicine industry can be identified as one of the major issues for companies not looking apparently to change existing system.

### **1.2. Interpretation of Data Received from suppliers.**

Interview was also conducted with suppliers of ayurvedic medicines in the Indian market those supply medicines to retailers or medical stores to make medicine available for consumers. For any ayurvedic manufacturing or medicine company, it is essential that they receive information about orders, inventory, customer request or delivery to determine estimated demand in the market and thus proceed with the production to meet supply demanded in the market. To evaluate importance of supply chain management system and its impacts on business performance in ayurvedic pharmaceutical industry, it was also important to investigate suppliers as they play crucial role in supplying medicines from manufacturing companies to end consumers. During the investigation, it was agreed by all three suppliers participated that they have their supply chain software that acts as an efficient tool to manage all activities related to orders, invoicing, inventories, and customer management.

#### ***Response from Supplier-1***

*“. well. We are into ayurvedic supply business for many larger companies like Dabour, Patanjali, Jiva, Hamdard etc. where without using software it was a challenge to manage orders, inventory, and billing.”*

#### ***Response from Supplier-2***

*“. software based supply chain system was important for us to manage complex activities related to billing and orders. without this...I don't consider doing a supply business easy for anyone.”*

### ***Response from Supplier-3***

*“in my point of view for technology-based supply chain management system, it is integral to every business in today’s industry to avoid any complexities.”*

From the responses received above, it was evident that supply chain management system has become an integral tool for suppliers in today’s ayurvedic medicine industry where no business now operates without having software to manage order and billing related business activities. Another interesting point disclosed about the need to integrate supply chain management system as important for businesses in Indian market was related to introduction of GST regulation where suppliers, businesses and distributors must maintain their business transactions every month for filing GST return and to avail tax input credit. This was one of the key outcomes of the study revealed during the interview with supplier-2 and therefore it can be considered as another factor leading to supply chain management system at suppliers and distributors end to maintain records and orders appropriately.

Similar to responses received from people working at ayurvedic medicine companies, supplier also consider cost and expertise as two important and common issues for implementing software-based supply chain management system. During the interview, all three suppliers have confirmed that they before installing order management system and invoicing software as new supply chain management system, they were concerned for the cost and required expertise to operate new software. However, over a period of 3-6 months, they have managed to make accountant understand the functions of the software with useful manuals and training. They seem to be highly satisfied and comfortable in using software that provide them effective and efficient supply chain management while dealing with core business activities.

### **Discussion and Findings on Objective-1**

***“To seek out the impact of SCM in Ayurvedic medicines in India.”***

First objective of this study was mainly aimed to evaluate perception, significance and impacts of supply chain management among players in ayurvedic pharmaceutical industry in India. From the analysis made in the previous chapter in relation to this objective, it can be understood that both manufacturing companies as well as traders, supplier or distributors consider the role of supply chain management software integral to manage range of business activities right from

ensuring timely delivery of raw material, operations, inventory to customer delivery. Using software-based supply chain systems such as inventory management or supplier management systems, lean manufacturing or production process can be made effective and cost efficient. This finding supports the view of Bagher (2018) who consider the impacts of supply chain management tools to improve performance and profitability and gain competitive benefits. In the literature review chapter, Pettersson and Segerstedt (2011) have suggested that supply chain management systems help in cutting the unnecessary operations and helps in minimizing costs, save time and resources to enhance overall business efficiency. In addition, as revealed in the primary data, supply chain management strengthens businesses gain competitive advantages, this view support the findings of Camuffo and Grandinetti (2011) who consider supply software as integral to business performance when it comes to maximize customer value and gain sustainable competitive benefit. As revealed in the findings about potential impacts of technology-based supply chain management system or software, impacts of such systems support the view of Kumar and Anas (2013) who have addressed about inventory management system to manage inventory levels of raw materials at production stage and meet out supply demanded in the market.

### **1.3. Discussion on Objective-2**

***“To determine the factors that lead to the implementation of supply chain management on Ayurvedic medicines in India.”***

Primary data as analyzed above can be evident strongly to understand main factors that lead to the implementation of supply chain systems among organizations and traders in ayurvedic medicine industry in India. Findings support the view developed in the literature as there were some common factors identified in both primary data and secondary data. Increase in urbanization, rapid technological developments and increasing use of technology in industries and rising demand for ayurvedic products in Indian market were commonly identified factors in literatures that create demand for implementing efficient and effective supply chain management so that production, operations, marketing, distribution and retailing activities could be managed effectively. Almost similar findings were revealed in primary data interpretation where traders consider factors such as timely delivery of products, increasing use of technology and rising demand of ayurvedic medicines as major driving factors that push them to adopt technology led and efficient supply chain management software. Supply chain software provides better exposure

to the management people in terms of information availability to make timely decisions and perform all activities. However, primary data received from suppliers has disclosed that after GST was introduced in Indian market, it was more complex and challenging for traders, suppliers or retailers to report transactions in accordance to GST regulations which led them to implement software such as inventory management or order management software to streamline business transactions and reporting activities and ensure no delay in GST filing required to make every month.

#### **1.4. Discussion on Objective-3**

##### ***“To identify the various issues related to Supply Chain Management on Ayurvedic medicines in India”***

Analyzing responses received from primary sources, major issues and challenges were identified that creates hurdles for Indian ayurvedic medicine companies in adopting or integrating software-based supply chain management. Primary investigations reveal that expertise, cost, resource capability and competition are most comply issues for marketers and suppliers in the industry which causes as low interests for implementing supply chain system or investing into ERP based supply chain management software. Technical expertise required in integration of software for SCM seems to be a major issue behind less integration of SCM in ayurvedic medicine industry in India as there are a larger number of small to medium level players who are not willing to increase any additional cost. This finding supports the view of Awad and Nassar (2010) who find technical requirements and expertise as major challenge for integration of SCM. As suggested by Msimangira and Venkatraman, (2014) in literature, enterprise integration was identified as a challenge for any organisation where managing change for SCM remains a reason for low interests among marketers or suppliers to look for effective SCM system. Findings also reveal that resource capability remains a challenge for Indian Ayurvedic industry where no business consider making any change in existing supply or logistics system which could affect business performance. Changing anything new in existing capacity can affect overall business results which remain a challenge for many in the industry not looking to incorporate significant change in existing supply chain management system.

## 1.5. Conclusion

This made significant contribution in the study evaluating impacts of supply chain management on Indian ayurvedic pharmaceutical industry. From the findings presented and interpreted above, it was clear to understand that supply chain management has gained huge significance over the years where ayurvedic medicine companies have adopted new software based systems such as inventory management software, supplier management systems, lean inventory software etc. to manage order, supply, distributing and retailing related activities. Key benefits of using such systems were revealed as ease of reporting, cost saving and growth in sales through predicting demand in the market. While investigating for factors leading to implement supply chain management within ayurvedic medicine industry, this chapter has revealed that increasing use of technology, need for timely delivery of raw materials and rising demand of ayurvedic medicines in the market have created more opportunities and growth in the market resulting to more and complex business transactions and creating need for adopting efficient supply chain software. However, when it comes to assess issues for implementing supply chain system, cost of the software, expertise required, managing change and competition were identified as major challenges. Established businesses were less intent to make changes in existing supply chain management approach as it could have affected their core business activities and performance.

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