

STUDENTS APPROACH TOWARDS UNANI MEDICINE AND HOME REMEDIES FOR COMMON AILMENT USING UNANI SYSTEM OF MEDICAL TREATMENT: A SAMPLE SURVEY

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ABSTRACT

Unani medical system of treatment of various ailments used in Greece 5000 years back is an age-old, time-tested system of treatment. It is like other modern methods of treatment, a well recognized method of treatment by which an individual can live a healthy life with the least or zero sickness. A number of studies in recent years have been conducted to establish the scientific validity of Unani medicine system for the treatment of various diseases like neurological, musculoskeletal and psychosomatic disorders. In present, study a well-developed validated questionnaire was used to assess the awareness of students towards usage of Unani medicine for treatment of common routine health issues. In this survey, we chose 400 students at random for our study on their consent via online/offline mode from various higher educational institutions of Kashmir valley. . A well developed designed validated questionnaire was used for the collection of data and data collected was analyzed using appropriate statistical tools with the help of Statistical Software SPSS (Version 20). The study revealed that majority of the respondents was aware of common method of treatment using traditional way of treatment but lack in practice. The respondents understudy male as well as female reported that for the promotion of general health they prefer Unani system of treatment for fitness as well as in treating minor health problems as they have less side effects as compared to modern methods of treatments.

KEY WORDS: Unani medicine, Student, Survey, health promotion, Statistics

INTRODUCTION:

Unani name has been derived from a Greek word Ionian, meaning the knowledge of the states of the human body in health and sickness. The Unani system of medicine pertains to a tradition of Greco-Arabic medicine based on the teachings of Greek physician Buqrat (Hippocrates; 460-377 BC) and Roman physician Jalinoos (Galen). Arab and Persian physicians like Al Razi (Rhazes), Avicenna (Ibn Sina), Al Zahrawi and Ibn Nafis developed this into an elaborate medical system. It has been reported

(Sina and Quanoon 2007; Ahmad and Asri, 1983) that traditional medicine system practised in ancient traditional systems of medicine of China, Egypt, India, Iraq, Persia and Syria is widely practised in South Asia and other parts of the world. We know that among all communities, concept of health is part of their culture and is defined as absence of diseases since time immemorial. Health as per WHO, an issue of social justice, is a state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not simply the absence of disease. The holistic concept appreciates that the strength of social, economic, political and environmental consequences on health. It was found (Parik, 2009; Kabeeruddin, 2009) that all sectors of society are linked with health and we must stress on the promotion and protection of health. Unani system of medicine describes the concept of Tabiyat, a supreme planner of the body to create the healthy environment within the body and prepare to fight against the illness. Tabiyat, sum total of structural, functional and psychological character of the human being, if strong, means man does not suffer easily from a disease. There is a special ability hidden in every person (Tabiyate Muddabare Badan) called the defensive mechanism of the body as per Hippocrates. It is the best physician and maintains the equilibrium of four body humours as per the natural chemical composition of the body. Tabiyat, broadly speaking is reasoned as the real healer of the body and the role of the Tabeeb (physician) is to assist this (Rushid, 1987). The Unani physicians for the purpose of improving body immunity and strengthening the Tabiyat recommended various drugs like muqawwe azae raisa (tonic for vital organs), mu-qawwe badan (general body tonic), muqawwe asab (nervine tonic), muqawwe qalb (cardiac tonic), muqawwe jigar (liver tonic) etc. A number of drugs of plant, mineral and animal origin are used in Unani system to strengthen, increase the immunity system and for the treatment of diseases such as ulcerative colitis, Crohn's disease, cancer, AIDS, rheumatoid arthritis etc. The major religions of the world believe that religious guidance plays a role in treatment of various diseases. The *Traditional* healing practices include not only medicinal substances of natural origin but also items like magic (sorcery), charms, incantations etc. In this regard as per Islam, Quran and hadiths, Unani medicine sees illness as an opportunity to serve, clean, purify and balance the physical, emotional, mental and spiritual planes. Unani therapies are considered natural which include appropriate fresh food (to correct the imbalances), herbal medicines, minerals, promotion of codes of conduct conducive to positive health, and appropriate rest as prevention and cure. It also emphasises compounds that belong to the human body and the avoidance of allergen-rendering foods. It was found that balance between mind and body is also crucial in the metabolic processes, and counselling is usually offered towards this goal (Gupta, 2009). On the basis of the available literature (e.g., Lone et al., 2012; Bilal et al., 2018, 2023; Rahim et al., 2020 etc), we mention below few home remedies as per Unani system of medication for treatment of common ailments:

1. **FEVER:** To treat this problem, take juice/ decoction of Gilo stem (*Tinospora cordifolia*) or of Tulsi leaves (*Ocimum sanctum*) 30ml 3 times a day till fever subsides.
2. **HEADACHE:** To treat this problem, Powder ½ teaspoon of Kishneez khusk (dhaniya, *Coriandrum sativum*) and ½ teaspoon of Zeera (*Cuminum cyminum*) mix with honey, 3 times a day Powder dry Ginger mix with water and

apply over forehead and temples.

3.COLD: To treat this problem, Take ½ tsp of Haldi powder and ½ tsp of pepper powder with milk add a 1 tsp honey, 3times a day, make solution of Thymol, Menthol and Camphor equal quantity, add two to three drops to boiling water take inhalation.

4. **COUGH:** To treat this problem, Make decoction of tender leaves of Adoosa (*Adhatoda vasika*) about ½ cup add 1tsp of freshginger juice and a tsp of honey take 3 times for 3-5 days.

5. **HEART BURN / ACIDITY:** To treat this problem, Powder Zeera, Dhaniya, Sonth (dry ginger), Soonf, Pudina dry and Munaqqa (Raisins) equal quantity, boil 1teaspoon of this mix powder in a cup of water, take 3 times after food.

6. **DIARRHOEA:** To treat this problem, Crush fresh fruit rind to extract juice, take ½ tsp 3-4 times in a day. Roast Methi seeds powder take 1tsp with butter milk or powder Jaiphal (Nutmeg) take 1 tsp with buttermilk.

7. **INDIGESTION:** To treat this problem, Take 1 tsp of fresh ginger juice and 1 tsp of lemon juice add a pinch of Black salt and Zeera ½tsp powder take 3 times after food.

8. **CONSTIPATION:** To treat this problem, Cut one medium size onion in pieces, fry in 1tsp of ghee till it becomes soft eat the whole quantity with a glass of hot water at bed time for 3-5 days. Take plenty of boiled Palak, Sahajna (drum stick leaves, *Moringa oleifera*),and Kamooni greens(*Berg e Makoo*, *Solanum nigrum*)

9.**CUTS AND WOUNDS:** To treat this problem, Crush the Lajwanti plant (Touch me not, *Mimosa pudica*) apply over the wound, Cut Gheekawar leaf (*Aloe vera*) into two lengthwise sprinkle turmeric powder on it place on the wound and bandage.

10. **PAIN IN JOINTS AND LEGS:** To treat this problem, Prepare oil by boiling 100 gms of Neem leaves and Pudina leaves in castor oil add 1 tsp of salt,boil on low flame for ½ hr, apply on affected area and massage till oil is absorbed 2 times in a day till pain is relieved.

11. **DIABETES:** To treat this problem, Powder Methi (*Fenugreek*), Kalonji (*Nigella sativa*) and Tukhme Kasni (*Chicory seeds*, *Cichorium intybus*) equal quantity, take ½ tsp daily before food 3 times. Eat plenty of vegetables like Guar beans, Knolkhol, Karela, Bhindi.

12. **BURNING MICTURITION:** To treat this problem, Make a juice of cucumber about 4” in size with milk 200 ml add 3-4 Ilaichi (*Cardamoms*) andsugar for taste take 3 times in a day. Today’s girl is tomorrow’s mother. It is important to prepare them for the future by counseling them on family life, proper nutrition, personal hygiene, immunization and reproductive health.

13. **PAINFUL MENSTRUATION /DYSMENORRHEA :** To treat this problem, we use *Argemone mexicana* (*Satyanasi*), crush two leaves to extract juice in a cup of raw milk, add a pinch of soda bicarbonate and to be taken empty stomach in morning for three days. *Aloe vera* (*Gheekavar*) – crush leaf pulp to extract juice and take 6tsp of juice thrice daily for 7- 10 days with honey. *Saraca indica* (*Ashoka bark*) if fresh crush the bark to extract juice take 10 ml with honey thrice daily, if dry powder the bark boil it take the decoction 15- 20ml.

14.**IRREGULAR AND SCANTY MENSTRUATION:** To treat this problem, *Aloe vera* boil the pulp till it is thick , rub on a stone or grind it in blender, Take 1 tsp twice start seven days before the menstruation. *Hibiscus rosanensis* flowers grind 4 fresh flowers take the paste on empty stomach for seven days. Paste of three gms each of equal quantity of black til (*sesame*), sonth gheekawar and jaggery with warm water twice daily or decoction of above in dose of 10-20 ml twice daily

15. **EXCESSIVE MENSTURATION:** To treat this problem, *Adhatoda vasaka* (*Adoosa*) crush leaves to extract juice take 6 tsp of fresh juice 3 times a day with honey. *Mimosa pudica* (*Lajwanti*) crush leaves to extract juice take 6 tsp of fresh juice 3 times a day with honey. *Cynodon dactylon* (*Darbe/ dhruva* grass) crush leaves to extract juice take 6 tsp of fresh juice 3 times a day with honey. *Punica*

granatum (Anar ki chaal/ bark) if fresh crush the bark to extract juice take 10 ml with honey thrice daily, if dry powder the bark boil it take the decoction 15- 20ml. Asparagus racemosus (Satawar) crush the tubers to extract juice take 4 tsp of fresh juice with sugar three times in a day.

16. WHITE DISCHARGE/LEUCORRHEA: To treat this problem, Aloe vera – crush leaf pulp to extract juice and take 6tsp of juice thrice daily for 7-10 days with honey Hibiscus rosiness white flowers (Gudhal) grind 4 fresh flowers take the paste on empty stomach for seven days. Asparagus racemosus (Sataver) crush the tubers to extract juice take 4 tsp of fresh juice with sugar three times in a day. Tamarindus indicus (Imli) seeds roast the seeds powder take 3gms with 1tsp butter twice daily. Saraca indica (Ashoka bark) if fresh crush the bark to extract juice take 10 ml with honey thrice daily, if dry powder the bark boil it take the decoction 15- 20ml.

17. MARRIAGE: To treat this problem, Early marriage should be discouraged, marriage advised mostly after completion of education so that she is matured physically and mentally to take care of the family and the child.

18. DURING PREGNANCY: Diet: the pregnant woman should take nutritious, light, easily digestible food with lots of green, fresh vegetables, fruits, milk, and plenty of water.

19.MORNING SICKNESS:*Punica granatum* (Sharbat e Anar) in dryness of throat, Anar is the best to quench thirst Lemon with honey Eleteria cardamom (Ilaichi) chewing few seeds or powder with honey. Murabba e Amla one in the morning daily

20. LOSS OF APPETITE: To treat this problem, Powder of *Foeniculum vulgare* (Saunf), *Coriandrum sativum* (Dhaniya), *Cuminum cyminum* (Zeera) and *Piper nigrum* (pepper) with equal amount of sugar take 1tsp of powder 3 times 1 hr before food. A small piece of *Zingiber officinale* (ginger) dipped in lemon juice should be chewed slowly with little black salt Equal quantity of ginger juice, pudina juice, lemon, anar juice is boiled with three times sugar to make a thick syrup , when cool add little quantity of jeera, elaichi and pepper and mix well, take 2-4 gms thrice or four times /day.

21. BODY ACHE AND FEVERS : To treat this problem, *Tinospora cordifolia* (Gilo/ gulvel) remove bark from stem and crush 8” long stem to make decoction, take 1 cup decoction 3 times / day. *Ocimum sanctum* (tulsi leaves), *Piper nigrum* (pepper) and *Curcuma long* (Haldi) make a decoction with a cup of water and take half cup three times daily.

22. BURNING MICTURITION AND UTI: To treat this problem, *Vetiveria zizanioides* (Khas/ usheera) powder the roots , boil 10 gms of powder in 100ml water reduce it to half add sugar and take 3-4 times /day *Nelumbium speciosum* (Gul e Neelofer) take 8-10 fresh flowers boil in 200 ml water filter add sugar make a thick syrup and take 3-4 times / day. *Glycyrrhiza glabra* (Mulathi) 5 gms of powder boiled with 1 cup of milk and taken 3-4 times / day.

23. IN OEDEMA AND SCANTY URINATION: To treat this problem, *Boerhavia diffusa* (Biskhapra/ punarnava) crush 8” long stem with leaves to make decoction, take 1 cup decoction 3 times / day *Eleteria cardamom* (ilaichi) powder the seeds mix with coconut water or amla juice *Tribulus terrestris* (ghogru) fruits boiled in water and given in less urine output, retention and Swelling.

24.ABORTIONS: To check abortions, Rhizomes of Neelofer crushed and boiled in milk is recommended. *Asparagus racemosus* (Sataver) roots are crushed and boiled with milk is recommended, it helps to stabilize the foetus and aids in healthy growth, it is also given to increase breast milk.

25. ANAEMIA: To treat this problem, *Punica granatum* (Anar), Figs (Anjeer), Apple *Boerhavia diffusa* (Biskhapra leaves) *Moringa oleifera* (Sahajna/ drumstick leaves). Powder of dried root of *Withania somnifera*

(Asgandh) with milk as a general tonic this also helps in underweight or lethargic. *Vitis vinifera* (Munaqqa) juice is given to pregnant women and mothers in cases of anaemia, constipation and giddiness.

26. CONSTIPATION: To treat this problem, Green leafy vegetables, fruits like ripe guava, papaya, banana etc should be advised. *Vitis vinifera* (Munaqqa) 8-10 boiled with 250 ml of milk is given at bed time. Powder of *Triphala* (*Terminalia chebula*, *Terminalia bellerica*, *Embelica officinalis*) 5 gm with warm water is given at bed time. *Roghan e Badam shireen* (Badam oil) 1 tsp oil with 1 glass of warm milk is given at bed time.

27. AFTER DELIVERY: Juice of gheekavar pulp given in small doses to delivered woman will help to increase the flow of blood and aids to clean the uterus and in involution of uterus. *Zingiber officinale* (zanjabeel) used with salt or jaggery improves appetite and gives strength and energy to abdominal muscles. *Curcuma longa* (haldi) paste of haldi with oil or with neem leaves is applied over the body just before bath after delivery this will act as anti toxicant. Haldi powder with ghee is given after delivery to purify and strengthen uterus. *Trigonella foenum* (methi) seeds powder with dry coconut, Jaggery and ghee is given to energize, reduce bodyache, and fever after delivery.

28. TO INCREASE LACTATION: Decoction of *Asparagus racemosus* (Sataver). *Withania somnifera* (Asgand) with milk increases milk secretion. *Cyperus rotundus* (Nagar motha) paste is applied on the breasts. *Foeniculum vulgare* (Badiyan, sonf), *Anethum graveolens* (Shibit), *Cuminum cyminum* (zeera).

29. PLANTS USEFUL FOR CHILDREN: To treat child problem, Ghutti, Rub the following drugs on a clean flat stone accordingly with mother's milk. Rhizome of turmeric once, Dried ginger twice, Halela siah once, Halela kabuli once, Khajoor dry twice, Jaiphal once and mix with mother's milk and given twice in a day. *Curcuma longa*/ Haldi: Newborn child is applied with a paste of haldi and milk, it clears the skin and removes all the remnants of the amniotic fluid *Embelica officinalis* / Amla : powder mixed with a little amount of ghee and honey is given to the new born to gain strength. In stomatitis 5gms of Amla bark is made into paste with breast milk and applied inside mouth. A paste of Haldi, *Cyperus rotundus* (Nagar motha) and Neem leaves is applied in skin diseases of children *Carum carvi* /Ajwain: Seeds and leaves are boiled and used frequently in cold, fever, stomach pain, indigestion, worm infestation and body pain, it also promotes flow of urine. Powder of ajwain is useful in vomiting, stomach pain and dyspepsia of children. *Myristica fragrans* / Jaiphal : Powder with honey or with Sonth and Jaggery is recommended in childhood diarrhea, indigestion, vomiting, also powder of jaiphal with juice of tender mango leaves with is useful in diarrhea. *Aegle marmelos* / Bael fruit: Fruit pulp juice with sugar or honey in diarrhea, powder of dried fruit pulp is also useful in diarrhea in children. In view of the previous studies, importance and popularity of Unani system of medicine, we chose present study with an objective to assess the approach of students of Kashmir valley towards the use of Unani medicine for treatment of common ailments.

MATERIAL AND METHODS:

In this paper, we select 400 students randomly from different higher educational institutions of Kashmir valley via online/offline mode on their consent. A well designed validated questionnaire was used to collect the information in view of the literature available on the topic and on the characteristics of the respondent's viz., gender, residence, education status of parents, type of family, economic status of family etc. The students who participated in this study on their choice were given a verbal explanation regarding the purpose of this study and were assured that

confidentiality would be carried out throughout this survey. The sample size for present study was computed using standard method (Cochran, 1977)

$$n = \frac{Z_{\alpha}^2 P(1 - P)}{d^2}$$

Here, we take $p=0.5$, $Z_{\alpha} = 1.96$ and $d=0.05$. That gives the approximate sample size for our survey $n \sim 384$ and we decided to chose $n = 400$ respondents. The data collected from our survey was tabulated, analyzed and interpreted statistically using standard statistical tools. The statistical software Statistical Package for Social Sciences (version 20) was used for analysis of data collected from survey.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

Hypothesis: There is no significant difference in the choice of treatment for dealing with minor health issues in male and female respondents under study.

In order to test the research hypothesis, we use Chi-square test (with usual notations) given as

$$X^2 = \sum_{i=1}^2 \frac{(o_i - e_i)^2}{e_i}$$

where $X^2 \sim \chi_1^2$, o_i and e_i are observed and expected frequencies. We reject H_0 if p-value is less than specified level of significance.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

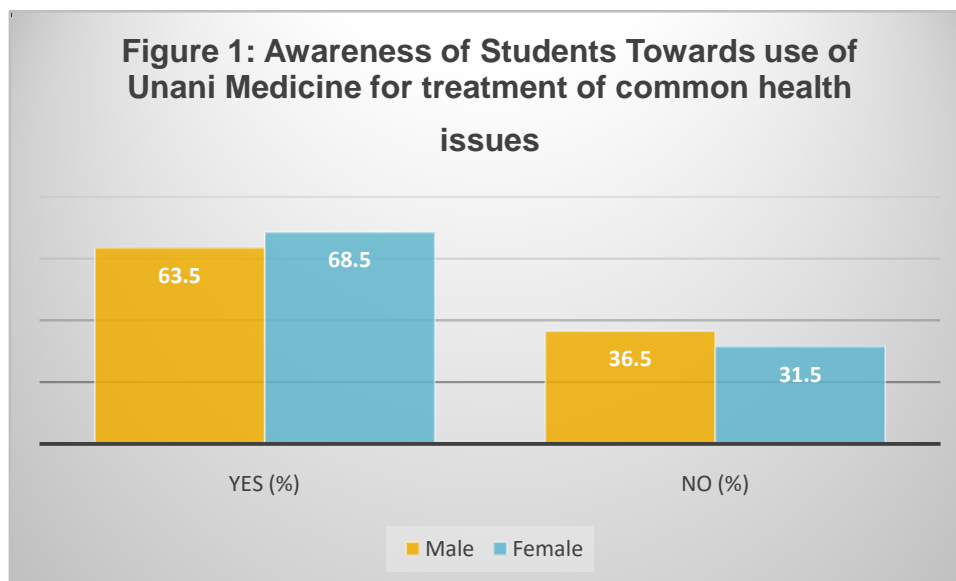
Table 1 shows the Gender, Residence, Education qualification, Profession of Father/Guardian and Family economic status of students understudy in higher educational institutions of Kashmir valley. As shown in Table 1, 50% male and 50% female were considered for current study in which the majority of the respondents 56.75% were from rural area, 46.0% respondents were pursuing post graduation (PG) and 87.0% respondents belong to middle class families. Further, professions of the majority of respondent's Father/Guardian was business (69.75%) and majority of respondents belong to nuclear family (70.75%).

Table 1: General information of the students understudy in Kashmir valley

Variable		Count	Percentage
Gender	Female	200	50.00
	Male	200	50.00
Residence	Rural	227	56.75

Education qualification	Urban	173	43.25
	UG	175	43.75
	PG	184	46.00
	PhD	41	10.25
Profession of Father/Guardian	Business	279	69.75
	Government employee	73	18.25
	Private employee	48	12.00
Family economic status	Lower class	31	7.75
	Middle class	348	87.00
	Upper class	21	5.25
Type of family	Joint	117	29.25
	Nuclear	283	70.75

The data presented in Figure 1, revealed that majority of students understudy (male=63.5%, female= 68.5%) were aware about Unani medicine as a mode of treatment to cure common health ailments. In general, we observe common people use traditional method of treatment of minor common health problems.



The data presented in Table 2, revealed that in response to almost all statements, response of male and female coincide. Unani system of medicine is practised in many countries worldwide and India is acting as a global leader in the field of developing pharmacopoeia standards of Unani medicine system. The respondents in majority were of the opinion that Unani system of medicine has less side effects and as compared to male, females prefer it more. The purpose of Unani system is to assist natural recuperative power and thus eradicate the ailment from the human

body. We know unani system and modern system of treatment are related as Modern system of medicine has built on what nature has to offer and has drawn upon traditional systems of knowledge of how medicinal plants, herbs, roots, and bark were wielded to cure sickness across civilizations.

Table 2: Approach of respondents towards treatment via Unani System

S.No.	Statement	Gender	Yes (%)	No (%)	No Idea (%)
1.	Do you have any idea about Unani System of treatment for ailment	Male	266(66.5)	64(16.0)	62(15.5)
		Female	278(69.5)	17.0 (68)	13.5 (54)
2.	Do you prefer Unani system of treatment for common minor diseases	Male	138(34.5)	148(37.0)	110(28.5)
		Female	154(38.5)	152(38.0)	94(23.5)
3.	Do you have any knowledge about Unani system of treatment	Male	70(17.5)	138(34.5)	192(48.0)
		Female	58(14.5)	228(57.0)	170(42.5)
4.	Do you feel Unani system of treatment is more effective than modern medicine treatment	Male	186(46.5)	130(32.5)	84(21.0)
		Female	206(51.5)	116(29.0)	78(19.5)
5.	Do the people of Kashmir give Unani method of medical treatment as much importance as modern treatments	Male	124(31)	174(43.5)	102(25.5)
		Female	150(37.5)	159(39.0)	94(23.5)
6	Do you think that Unani system of treatment has less side effects	Male	230(57.5)	62(15.5)	108(27.0)
		Female	258(64.5)	48(12.0)	94(23.5)
7.	Does Kashmir have sufficient Unani hospitals	Male	38(9.5)	298(74.5)	64(16.0)
		Female	28(7.0)	316(79.0)	56(14.0)

8.	Can Unani system of medicine prove to be a savior for people with chronic diseases	Male	172(43.0)	140(35.0)	88(22.0)
		Female	194(48.5)	110(27.5)	96(24.0)

The data presented in Table 3, revealed that majority of respondents both male as well as female prefer modern way of treatment. Further, as compared to male respondents 8.5%, 27.5% female respondents prefer Unani system of treatment which is in agreement with the earlier studies (Bilal et al., 2023). Statistically, there was nonsignificant difference between male and female respondents in the first choice of treatment for dealing with minor health issues ($P>0.05$).

Table 3: Choice of treatment to deal with routine health issue in the respondents

Statement	Gender	Yes (%)	No (%)	Not Sure (%)	Chi-square	P-value
My first choice of treatment to deal with any health issue is Unani System of treatment	Male	34 (8.5)	310 (77.5)	56 (14.0)	49.719	<0.01
	Female	110 (27.5)	238 (59.5)	52 (13.0)		

Limitation and strengths of the study

The clearest limitation of present study was the small sample size. It is observed that family status, gender and residence play a crucial role in life. We know that rural areas people prefer in majority the traditional method of treatment than modern way of treatment. The findings of our study provide a concise description of students approach towards the use of traditional medicine to deal with routine health issues. Recommendations

Based on the findings of our study, the following recommendations are made for the development of traditional healing systems:

1. In every higher educational institute, student must receive basic training for dealing with common diseases.
2. Government should provide Unani hospital facility to every area of Kashmir.

CONCLUSION

Unani system of medicine strives to find the best possible ways by which an individual can lead a healthy life with the least sickness. Worldwide millions of people prefer traditional medicine system for treatment of any disease as compared to modern system of treatment. It has been reported that out of 194 WHO Member states, 170 use traditional medicine. In present world, traditional medicine is also becoming more prominent as it is estimated that 40% natural substances are used by pharmaceutical products in their preparation. The present study conducted in higher educational institutions of Kashmir valley revealed that majority of students understudy (male=63.5%, female= 68.5%) were aware about Unani system of medicine as a mode of treatment to cure common health ailments. Further, the study revealed that female respondents showed more interest in usage of Unani medicine than male respondents understudy as they believe this system of medicine has less side effects as compared to modern system of treatment. However, statistically there was no significant difference between male and female respondents in the first choice of treatment for dealing with minor health issues ($P>0.05$). The results of our study are in partial agreement with the earlier studies (e.g., Bilal et al., 2018 and Bilal et al., 2023). It is important to note that use of traditional medicine system will increase the local industry. The researchers consulted herbal healers called “Bhoris” and Tribals (Gujjars and Bakerwals) during the study to get the helpful information about the medicinal plants use. It was suggested by researchers that special efforts should be made to conserve natural resources for the benefit of future generation of Kashmir.

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