

Advancing Healthcare Innovation Through Interdisciplinary Collaboration, Transparency, and Policy Reform: Repositioning Ayurveda in Contemporary Integrative Medicine.

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Abstract—The increasing burden of chronic diseases, mental health disorders, ageing populations, and rising healthcare costs has created a growing need for integrative and patient-centred healthcare approaches. Ayurveda, one of the oldest traditional systems of medicine, is gaining renewed attention for its emphasis on prevention, personalised care, lifestyle regulation, and holistic well-being. The present article explores the role of interdisciplinary collaboration, transparency, policy reform, and evidence-based discourse in advancing innovation in Ayurveda and strengthening its relevance within contemporary integrative healthcare systems. The study is a conceptual and analytical review based on classical Ayurvedic literature, peer-reviewed scientific publications, WHO reports, policy documents, and contemporary literature related to healthcare innovation and integrative medicine. The review highlights Ayurveda as an inherently interdisciplinary healthcare system that integrates physical, mental, environmental, and behavioural aspects of health. It further discusses the growing collaboration of Ayurveda with biomedical sciences, public health, digital technologies, artificial intelligence, and clinical research. The article also emphasises the importance of transparency, ethical practice, pharmacovigilance, quality assurance, and

supportive policy frameworks in improving scientific credibility and public trust. Although challenges such as limited large-scale clinical evidence, lack of standardised research methodologies, and regulatory issues persist, Ayurveda has significant potential to contribute to preventive healthcare, wellness sciences, chronic disease management, and future integrative healthcare models through responsible, evidence-based advancement.

Index Terms—Ayurveda; Integrative Medicine; Interdisciplinary Collaboration; Healthcare Innovation; Evidence-Based Practice; Public Health.

I. INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first century has brought increasingly complex healthcare challenges, including chronic lifestyle disorders, antimicrobial resistance, mental health conditions, ageing populations, environmental illnesses, and escalating healthcare expenditure. Conventional compartmentalised healthcare approaches are often insufficient to address such multidimensional problems, thereby necessitating interdisciplinary collaboration, systems thinking, and

patient-centred models of care. In recent years, integrative healthcare frameworks that combine preventive, promotive, curative, and rehabilitative strategies have gained growing global attention.^{1,2}

Ayurveda, literally meaning the “science of life,” represents one of the world’s oldest organised systems of medicine. Far beyond herbal therapeutics alone, Ayurveda encompasses comprehensive principles related to physiology, pathology, diagnostics, therapeutics, surgery, toxicology, rejuvenation, preventive medicine, nutrition, lifestyle regulation, mental wellbeing, and medical ethics. Classical texts such as the Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of holistic health management through integrated clinical reasoning and individualised care approaches.^{3,4}

The growing global demand for preventive medicine, personalised healthcare, wellness sciences, and sustainable low-cost therapeutic models has renewed scientific and public interest in Ayurveda. Simultaneously, advances in biomedical sciences, digital health technologies, public health research, artificial intelligence, and systems biology have created new opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration with traditional medical systems. However, meaningful integration of Ayurveda into contemporary healthcare requires more than cultural acceptance or historical recognition. It necessitates scientific validation, transparent research practices, ethical clinical standards, evidence-based policymaking, quality assurance, and constructive public discourse grounded in rational inquiry rather than ideological polarisation.^{5,6,7}

In this context, Ayurveda may be viewed not merely as a traditional medical heritage, but as a potentially relevant systems-based healthcare framework capable of contributing to future models of integrative medicine. The present article, therefore, explores the role of interdisciplinary collaboration, transparency, policy reform, and responsible political discourse in advancing innovation in Ayurveda, while examining its relevance within contemporary global healthcare systems.

II. AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The present article aims to critically explore the role of interdisciplinary collaboration, transparency, policy reform, and evidence-based discourse in advancing

innovation within Ayurveda and integrative healthcare systems.

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To examine the significance of interdisciplinary collaboration in contemporary healthcare innovation.
2. To analyse Ayurveda as a comprehensive and inherently interdisciplinary medical system.
3. To assess the importance of transparency, ethical accountability, and scientific rigour in Ayurvedic education, research, and clinical practice.
4. To evaluate the role of policy frameworks, governance, and institutional support in the advancement of Ayurveda.
5. To explore future directions for the evidence-based integration of Ayurveda within global healthcare systems.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is a conceptual and analytical review based primarily on secondary sources of data. The review includes classical Ayurvedic literature, peer-reviewed scientific publications, public health reports, policy documents, WHO reports, and contemporary literature related to integrative medicine, healthcare innovation, and interdisciplinary research.

An interpretative and thematic analytical approach was employed to correlate traditional Ayurvedic principles with emerging concepts in modern healthcare systems, including integrative medicine, public health policy, digital health, and evidence-based clinical practice. The study further attempts to examine the opportunities and challenges associated with the scientific advancement and global integration of Ayurveda.

IV. AYURVEDA AS AN INTERDISCIPLINARY KNOWLEDGE SYSTEM

4.1 Ashtanga Ayurveda and Functional Integration

Ayurveda has traditionally functioned as a multidisciplinary system of healthcare integrating various branches of medicine within a unified framework. The concept of Ashtanga Ayurveda (eight branches of Ayurveda) demonstrates an organised and specialised approach to healthcare, comparable to modern medical specialities, while maintaining a holistic understanding of the patient.

The eight branches include:

- 1) Kayachikitsa – Internal medicine
- 2) Shalyatantra – Surgery
- 3) Shalakyaatantra – ENT, Ophthalmology, and Dentistry
- 4) Kaumarbhritya – Pediatrics and maternal support
- 5) Agadtantra – Toxicology
- 6) Bhutavidya – Mental and psychological health
- 7) Rasayana – Rejuvenation and geriatric care
- 8) Vajikarana – Reproductive health and vitality

Although divided into specialties, Ayurveda approaches health in an integrated manner by considering factors such as Dosha, Agni, Prakriti, diet, lifestyle, mental wellbeing, and environmental influences.^{3,4}

4.2 Integration of Physical, Mental, and Environmental Health

Ayurveda views health as a balance between the body, mind, behaviour, and environment. Therefore, its principles extend beyond disease treatment and include:

- Diet and nutrition (Ahara)
- Lifestyle regulation (Vihara)
- Seasonal adaptation (Ritucharya)
- Daily health practices (Dinacharya)
- Mental wellbeing
- Community hygiene
- Ethical and disciplined living (Sadvritta)

This broad perspective highlights Ayurveda as a holistic life-science that combines preventive, promotive, and curative healthcare.^{3,4}

4.3 Preventive and Personalised Healthcare in Ayurveda

A major strength of Ayurveda is its emphasis on prevention and individualised care. Concepts such as Prakriti (body constitution), Agni (metabolic status), and lifestyle assessment help in understanding individual variations in health and disease.

These principles closely resemble modern ideas of personalised medicine and preventive healthcare, especially in the management of chronic lifestyle disorders and stress-related illnesses.^{3,4}

4.4 Relevance of Ayurveda in Contemporary Healthcare

Modern healthcare increasingly recognises the biopsychosocial model, which considers biological,

psychological, and social factors together. Ayurveda had described similar concepts centuries earlier through its integrated understanding of body-mind-environment relationships. Principles related to mental balance, sleep, diet, behaviour, and environmental adaptation reflect Ayurveda's holistic and patient-centred approach, making it relevant to present-day integrative medicine.

V. CONTEMPORARY INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLABORATIONS IN AYURVEDA

5.1 Ayurveda and Biomedical Sciences

Collaboration between Ayurveda and modern biomedical sciences can help generate scientific evidence for Ayurvedic interventions. Fields such as phytochemistry, molecular biology, immunology, microbiome research, and clinical biostatistics may help in understanding the mechanisms, safety, and therapeutic potential of Ayurvedic medicines and therapies. Such interdisciplinary research can strengthen evidence-based integrative healthcare.

5.2 Ayurveda and Public Health

Ayurveda has an important role in preventive and promotive healthcare. Principles related to diet, lifestyle regulation, seasonal adaptation, and healthy living can support public health initiatives such as non-communicable disease prevention, school health programs, community nutrition, and geriatric care. Its preventive approach aligns well with modern public health goals.

5.3 Ayurveda and Mental Health Sciences

Ayurveda gives considerable importance to mental well-being through concepts such as Sattva, Dinacharya, meditation, sleep regulation, and mind-body balance. These principles may support integrative approaches in stress management, psychosomatic disorders, and mental health care, especially in the present era of increasing stress-related illnesses.

5.4 Ayurveda and Digital Health Technologies

Digital technologies can improve the accessibility and standardisation of Ayurvedic healthcare. Telemedicine, electronic health records, mobile health applications, and digital documentation systems may help improve patient follow-up, data collection, and continuity of care in integrative medicine practice.

5.5 Ayurveda and Digital Health

Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) may further support personalised Ayurveda. AI-based Prakriti assessment, predictive wellness models, and data-driven healthcare tools have the potential to combine traditional Ayurvedic concepts with modern technological innovations. Although still developing, this area offers promising opportunities for future interdisciplinary research.

VI. TRANSPARENCY AND SCIENTIFIC ACCOUNTABILITY IN AYURVEDA

6.1 Importance of Transparency in Integrative Medicine

Transparency is essential for strengthening public trust, scientific credibility, and the global acceptance of Ayurveda. As Ayurveda becomes increasingly integrated with modern healthcare systems, there is a growing need for evidence-based research, ethical practice, and responsible communication. Transparent systems help distinguish authentic Ayurveda from misinformation and commercial misuse.¹

6.2 Transparency in Clinical Research and Publications

The scientific advancement of Ayurveda depends on well-designed and transparently reported research. Clinical trial methodology, ethical approval, publication standards, and accurate reporting of results should follow accepted scientific guidelines. Interdisciplinary collaboration can further improve the quality and reliability of Ayurvedic research.⁵

6.3 Ethical Practice and Informed Consent

Ethical clinical practice is an important part of integrative healthcare. Proper informed consent, patient confidentiality, and responsible prescribing practices help maintain professional standards and improve patient confidence in Ayurvedic care.⁸

6.4 Drug Standardisation and Quality Assurance

Standardisation of Ayurvedic medicines is necessary to ensure safety and consistency. Herbal and mineral preparations require botanical authentication, Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP), dose standardisation, shelf-life studies, and quality control testing wherever required. Such measures improve both national and international confidence in Ayurvedic products.⁹

6.5 Pharmacovigilance and Safety Monitoring

Pharmacovigilance plays an important role in monitoring the safety of Ayurvedic medicines and therapies. Proper adverse event reporting and safety monitoring systems are necessary for strengthening evidence-based Ayurvedic practice and improving patient safety.^{10,11}

6.6 Regulatory Transparency and Institutional Accountability

Transparent governance in education, research, manufacturing, and healthcare delivery is essential for the responsible advancement of Ayurveda. Supportive policies, ethical regulation, and institutional accountability can help strengthen the integration of Ayurveda within contemporary healthcare systems.⁵

VII. POLICY FRAMEWORKS FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF AYURVEDA

7.1 Educational Reforms in Ayurvedic Training

The advancement of Ayurveda requires educational reforms that combine classical Ayurvedic knowledge with modern scientific understanding. Along with textual learning, greater emphasis should be given to research methodology, clinical epidemiology, pharmacology, digital literacy, and evidence-based clinical practice. Such interdisciplinary training can help develop globally competent Ayurvedic professionals.

7.2 Research Funding and Institutional Support

India already has multiple funding initiatives and institutional programs supporting research and innovation in Ayurveda through the Ministry of AYUSH, CCRAS, research councils, academic institutions, and interdisciplinary collaborative projects. These initiatives have created valuable opportunities for scientific research, capacity building, and integrative healthcare development.

However, along with increasing financial support, greater emphasis is needed on evidence-based research, proper utilisation of funds, methodological rigour, ethical conduct, interdisciplinary collaboration, and publication quality. Transparent monitoring and outcome-oriented research approaches are essential to ensure that these funding mechanisms contribute meaningfully to the scientific advancement and global credibility of Ayurveda.¹²

7.3 Integrative Healthcare Institutions and Models

Integrative healthcare institutions combining Ayurveda with modern diagnostics and emergency care can improve patient-centred healthcare delivery. Such collaborative models may strengthen treatment outcomes, expand patient choice, and promote interdisciplinary clinical practice.

7.4 Intellectual Property Rights and Traditional Knowledge Protection

Protection of traditional medical knowledge is important in the era of globalisation and commercialisation. Traditional knowledge databases, proper documentation, and patent safeguards help prevent biopiracy while supporting ethical research and innovation in Ayurveda.

7.5 National and International Policy Support

Supportive national and international policies are necessary for the responsible integration of Ayurveda into healthcare systems. Policy initiatives related to education, research, quality control, regulation, and global collaboration can strengthen the scientific and institutional development of Ayurveda.

7.6 Role of WHO and Global Traditional Medicine Strategies

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has increasingly emphasised the importance of traditional and integrative medicine within global healthcare systems. The WHO Global Traditional Medicine Strategy highlights the need for research, regulation, safety monitoring, quality assurance, and evidence-based integration of traditional medicine practices, including Ayurveda.⁷

VIII. POLITICAL AND SOCIAL DISCOURSE SURROUNDING AYURVEDA

8.1 Political Influence on Healthcare Systems

Political and policy decisions play an important role in shaping the growth and integration of traditional medical systems such as Ayurveda. Government support through research funding, institutional development, public health initiatives, insurance inclusion, and international collaborations has contributed significantly to the expansion of Ayurveda in recent years.¹²

8.2 Opportunities Created Through Policy Advocacy

Supportive policy initiatives can strengthen Ayurveda through increased research opportunities, rural healthcare expansion, wellness programs, and global academic collaboration. Public awareness campaigns and international cooperation in traditional medicine have also improved the visibility of Ayurveda within integrative healthcare discussions.

8.3 Challenges of Ideological Polarisation

At the same time, discussions surrounding Ayurveda can sometimes become overly ideological rather than evidence-oriented. Extreme positions either uncritical acceptance or complete rejection may weaken scientific dialogue, create confusion among the public, and slow meaningful innovation. Balanced academic discussion is therefore essential for the responsible advancement of Ayurveda.

8.4 Need for Evidence-Based Public Discourse

The future growth of Ayurveda depends on constructive and evidence-based discourse involving researchers, clinicians, policymakers, and the public. Scientific evidence, ethical practice, and transparent communication should remain central to discussions related to integrative medicine and healthcare policy.

8.5 Media, Public Perception, and Scientific Communication

Media and public communication strongly influence how Ayurveda is perceived globally. Responsible scientific communication can help improve awareness, reduce misinformation, and promote a realistic understanding of the strengths and limitations of Ayurvedic healthcare. Accurate dissemination of research findings and public health information is therefore important for maintaining credibility and public trust.

IX. CLINICAL AND PUBLIC HEALTH RELEVANCE OF INTEGRATIVE AYURVEDIC INNOVATION

9.1 Lifestyle and Non-Communicable Disorders

Ayurveda may play a supportive role in the management of lifestyle and non-communicable disorders such as obesity, type 2 diabetes, hypertension, and sleep disturbances. Its emphasis on diet regulation, lifestyle modification, preventive care, and individualised treatment approaches aligns well

with the growing need for long-term chronic disease management.

9.2 Mental Health and Stress-Related Disorders

Increasing levels of stress and mental health concerns have highlighted the importance of holistic approaches to wellbeing. Ayurvedic concepts related to daily routine, sleep regulation, meditation, and mind-body balance may support integrative approaches in stress management and psychosomatic health.

9.3 Chronic Pain and Rehabilitation

Ayurvedic therapies are also widely explored in chronic pain conditions and rehabilitation support, including osteoarthritis, cervical spondylosis, migraine, and musculoskeletal disorders. Integrative approaches combining Ayurveda with rehabilitation and lifestyle interventions may help improve quality of life in chronic conditions.

9.4 Preventive and Wellness Healthcare

Prevention remains one of the strongest aspects of Ayurveda. Concepts such as Dinacharya (daily regimen), Ritucharya (seasonal regimen), Rasayana, and healthy lifestyle practices promote physical and mental well-being and may contribute to preventive healthcare and healthy ageing.^{3,4}

9.5 Community and School Health Applications

Ayurvedic principles related to nutrition, hygiene, lifestyle education, and preventive health can also contribute to community and school health programs. Such approaches may support health awareness, wellness promotion, and early preventive care at the population level.

X. CHALLENGES IN THE GLOBAL INTEGRATION OF AYURVEDA

10.1 Lack of Uniform Research Methodologies

One of the major challenges in Ayurvedic research is the lack of uniform research methodologies that fully accommodate the individualised and holistic nature of Ayurveda. Conventional biomedical research models may not always capture the complexity of Ayurvedic interventions, creating difficulties in evidence generation and comparison of studies.

10.2 Standardisation and Quality Control Issues

Variations in raw materials, manufacturing processes, and formulation standards can affect the consistency and quality of Ayurvedic medicines. Strengthening standardisation, quality assurance, and regulatory monitoring remains essential for wider scientific and global acceptance.

10.3 Limited Large-Scale Clinical Evidence

Although many studies on Ayurveda are available, there is still a need for more large-scale, well-designed, and multicentric clinical trials. Stronger clinical evidence can improve scientific credibility and support evidence-based integration into mainstream healthcare systems.

10.4 Fragmented Regulatory and Institutional Structures

The integration of Ayurveda into healthcare systems is sometimes affected by fragmented policies, institutional gaps, and limited interdisciplinary coordination. Better collaboration between researchers, clinicians, policymakers, and regulatory bodies is necessary for sustainable growth and implementation.

10.5 Balancing Traditional Principles with Scientific Validation

A major challenge lies in maintaining the core principles of Ayurveda while adapting to modern scientific frameworks. The future of Ayurveda depends on achieving a balanced approach that respects traditional knowledge while encouraging rigorous scientific validation and ethical clinical practice.

XI. FUTURE DIRECTIONS AND STRATEGIC RECOMMENDATIONS

11.1 Establishment of Multidisciplinary Research Ecosystems

Future advancement of Ayurveda requires stronger interdisciplinary collaboration between Ayurveda, biomedical sciences, public health, biotechnology, and digital health systems. Establishing multidisciplinary research centres can help promote evidence-based innovation and integrative healthcare research.

11.2 Adaptive and Pragmatic Clinical Trial Models

Conventional clinical trial models may not always fully capture the individualised and holistic nature of Ayurvedic interventions. Therefore, there is a need for adaptive and pragmatic research designs that maintain scientific rigour while accommodating core Ayurvedic concepts such as Prakriti, individualised treatment approaches, multi-component interventions, and lifestyle-based therapies.

There is also a growing need for modification and expansion of existing reporting frameworks, such as CONSORT and CARE guidelines, to better suit Ayurvedic clinical research. Ayurveda-specific extensions addressing personalised treatment protocols, Anupana, Pathya-Apathya, procedural therapies, and holistic outcome measures may improve the quality, transparency, and scientific relevance of Ayurvedic clinical trials and case studies.

11.3 AI-Assisted Personalised Ayurveda Platforms

Emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and digital health platforms may support personalised Ayurvedic healthcare through Prakriti-based assessment, predictive wellness models, and improved clinical documentation. Such innovations can strengthen future integrative healthcare systems.

11.4 Strengthening Research Literacy and Ethics

Improving research literacy, publication quality, ethical awareness, and evidence-based clinical practice among Ayurvedic professionals is essential for scientific growth and global credibility. Greater emphasis should also be placed on transparent reporting and responsible research conduct.

11.5 Development of Integrative OPD/IPD Models

Integrative OPD and IPD models combining Ayurveda with modern diagnostics and multidisciplinary care may improve patient-centred healthcare delivery. Such collaborative clinical settings can strengthen both treatment outcomes and interdisciplinary learning.

11.6 Global Academic and Research Collaborations

International academic exchange, collaborative research, and global publication opportunities can help improve scientific dialogue and expand the global reach of Ayurveda. Responsible and evidence-oriented collaboration remains important for the future integration of Ayurveda into contemporary healthcare systems.

XII. DISCUSSION

The present review highlights that many principles of Ayurveda remain highly relevant to current healthcare needs, particularly in the areas of preventive medicine, lifestyle disorders, personalised care, and holistic wellbeing. Its integrated understanding of physical, mental, behavioural, and environmental health closely aligns with the growing global shift toward patient-centred and integrative healthcare models.

The analysis also suggests that interdisciplinary collaboration can play an important role in strengthening the scientific foundation of Ayurveda. Collaboration with biomedical sciences, public health, digital technologies, and clinical research may improve evidence generation, standardisation, and wider acceptance of Ayurvedic interventions.

The review further identifies important challenges, including limited large-scale clinical evidence, lack of uniform research methodologies, and difficulties in balancing traditional Ayurvedic principles with modern scientific frameworks. Addressing these challenges through collaborative and evidence-oriented approaches may help strengthen the future integration of Ayurveda within contemporary healthcare systems.

Overall, Ayurveda has significant potential to contribute to future healthcare innovation, particularly in preventive healthcare, wellness sciences, chronic disease management, and integrative medicine. However, its long-term growth depends on responsible research, transparent systems, and scientifically grounded advancement.

XIII. CONCLUSION

13.1 Ayurveda as a Future-Oriented Integrative Healthcare System

Ayurveda is not merely a traditional medical system but a healthcare framework with continuing relevance in modern medicine. Its emphasis on prevention, personalised care, lifestyle regulation, and holistic wellbeing makes it increasingly relevant to present-day healthcare challenges.

13.2 Importance of Collaboration, Transparency, and Governance

The advancement of Ayurveda depends on interdisciplinary collaboration, transparent research

practices, ethical clinical standards, and supportive policy frameworks. Integrating Ayurveda with modern scientific and healthcare systems may strengthen both innovation and public trust.

13.3 Need for Evidence-Based and Ethically Responsible Advancement

The future growth of Ayurveda requires evidence-based research, methodological rigour, scientific communication, and ethically responsible practice. A balanced approach that respects traditional knowledge while encouraging scientific validation will be essential for the sustainable integration of Ayurveda into global healthcare systems.

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