

# A Study to Assess Knowledge and Attitude Regarding Selected Alternative Systems of Medicine among Adults in Selected Urban Communities of Guwahati, Assam

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**Abstract:** ***Introduction:** There is growing interest in complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), particularly the Indian systems of medicine. In 2019, World Health Organization (WHO) encouraged country members to support the regional traditional medicines by formulating policies and appropriate regulations inculcating it in preventive, promotive and curative aspect of health. **Objective:** The objective of the study was to assess the knowledge and attitude regarding selected alternative systems (Ayurveda, Homeopathy and Yoga) among adults of selected urban communities of Guwahati, Assam. **Methodology:** The study was a descriptive study conducted in selected urban communities of Guwahati, Assam. Data was collected from 150 samples by using convenience sampling technique. Socio-demographic proforma, self administered structured questionnaire on knowledge and self-structured 5 point attitude scale regarding selected Alternative systems of medicine was used to collect data. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS version 20. **Results:** The study showed that majority 47(31.3%) had moderate knowledge, regarding selected alternative system of medicine with an average mean score of  $11.81 \pm 5.717$ . Overall attitude of adults regarding selected alternative system of medicine was favourable (59.4%). Overall mean of attitude score was  $49.90 \pm 4.916$ . Overall result showed there was a positive correlation between knowledge and attitude ( $p=+0.001$ ). This shows that increase in the knowledge level results in favourable attitude in the adults regarding selected alternative system of medicine. There was significant association between selected demographic variables and knowledge level. There was significant association among age, religion, education, monthly income of family, previous use of alternative system of medicine and attitude level regarding alternative system of medicine. Though majority of the participants have moderate knowledge regarding the alternative systems of medicine, they have a positive attitude towards these systems. **Conclusion:** Proper knowledge and understanding regarding these systems of medicine will help in promoting and maintaining health and preventing many health issues of the individuals.*

**Keywords:** Knowledge, Attitude, Alternative Systems of Medicine

## 1. Introduction

Alternative system of medicine has been practiced in India for thousands of years. In fact, India is the birthplace of one of the oldest systems of medicines in the world that is – Ayurveda. Ayurveda, Yoga, Siddha, Unani, and Homeopathy are recognized in India as the Indian systems of medicines.

Different bodies have tried to define complementary and alternative medicine over the years. The National Centre for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) defines complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) as “a group of various medical and health care systems, practices, and products that are not presently considered to be an aspect of conventional medicine”. Complementary interventions are healthcare approaches which can be used side by side conventional interventions, whereas alternative medicines are used in place of conventional medicine. The Institute of Medicine, USA has defined CAM as – “complementary and alternative medicine is a broad domain of healing resources that encompasses all health systems, modalities, and practices and their accompanying theories and beliefs, other than those intrinsic to the politically dominant health system of a particular society or culture in a given historical period.”<sup>1</sup> There is growing interest in complementary and alternative medicine (CAM), particularly the Indian systems of medicine. In India

affordable and effective health care is still beyond the reach of vast sections of the population. The importance of traditional medicine has been realized in achieving the goal of “Health for all” and the department of ISM and H (Indian system of medicine and Homeopathy) was established in the ministry of health and family welfare in March 1995. It was renamed as department of Ayurveda, Yoga and Naturopathy, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy (AYUSH) in November 2003 with a view to providing focused attention to the development of education and research in AYUSH.<sup>2</sup> The Department of AYUSH in India has helped the recognition of these therapies and their use is growing exponentially, but their knowledge, use and relative popularity of different therapies differ among communities, societies, and countries.<sup>3</sup> Although the alternative systems of medicine are in various state of the country, people lack the adequate knowledge regarding these systems of medicine and often seem to hesitate in approaching the same.

## 2. Review of Literature

Shanmugam P et al. (2021) conducted a study on Knowledge, attitude and perception of complementary and alternative system of medicine in Tamilnadu and Pudhucherry, South India. A cross sectional study was conducted involving 200 adults in two different settings-a community setting (n=100), and a hospital setting (n=100). A semi-structured questionnaire was used. Both in the

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community and in the hospital, siddha (80%) was the most well-known system of medicine, followed by Yoga (72%) and Naturopathy in the study population. However, the knowledge about the various available CAM therapies still seemed to be limited. The study concluded that opinion on the integrated approach along with conventional medicine was welcoming. Still more awareness about these systems is required to facilitate integrative medicine in healthcare settings.<sup>4</sup>

Jaiswal K, Bajait C, Pimpalkhute S, et al (2015) conducted a study —A patient's perspective on knowledge, attitude and practice of complementary and alternative medicine in Maharashtra, India. This was a cross-sectional, questionnaire based survey including 100 patients attending out-patient department of a tertiary care teaching hospital. The aim of the study was to determine the knowledge, attitude and practice of CAM among patients and to determine factors influencing the use of CAM. Among the respondents, 79.0% were aware of CAM and 46.0 used it. Most common system used was Ayurveda (71.73%), and most common ailment for which it is used was arthritis (30.43%). Majority consulted quacks (43.47%); physicians (23.91%), friends and relatives (19.56%), and 15.21% took CAM as a self-medication. Thirty percent felt that CAM was based on scientific evidence, 25% felt it was safer than modern medicine that is significantly more in women when compared to men. Twenty-five percentage opined that CAM is more efficacious than modern medicine that is significantly more in respondents >40 years age. The most common advantages reported were complete cure, easy availability and no side-effects, whereas disadvantages include food restriction, expensive medication, symptomatic relief and effective for limited diseases. This study concluded that majority of patients use CAM along with modern medicine without physician's advice. Hence, healthcare professionals should be aware of this while taking clinical history and treating patients that may reduce drug interactions due to use of CAM particularly in the elderly population.<sup>5</sup>

Sarangi MR, Pramanik A, Gupta J, et. al. (2017) conducted a survey regarding awareness and beliefs about Homoeopathy among general population during Magh Mela at Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh, India. It was a cross-sectional survey conducted on patients and people visiting the health check-up camp and exhibition stall set-up during Magh Mela at Sangam, Allahabad. A self-administered questionnaire was used during the survey, devised by the Central Council for Research in Homoeopathy. Out of 1144 total respondents, 68.1% had knowledge about Homoeopathy. About 46.6% of respondents believed that it has no side effects and 15.1% believed that it is cost-effective. The diseases for which most of the participants have taken homoeopathic treatment were fever, common cold, constipation and diarrhoea. This study concluded that General population has knowledge about Homoeopathy, but various misconceptions are also prevalent. Awareness campaigns are needed to make people more aware about Homoeopathy and its effectiveness in various disorder.<sup>6</sup>

Gadham J, Sajja S, Rooha V (2015) conducted a study on effect of Yoga on obesity, hypertension and lipid profile. 50 male subjects in the age group of 35-55 years were randomly

selected based on exclusion criteria. BP, BMI and lipid profile was estimated before any intervention. They were subjected to pranayama and other Asana's for a period of 3 months. After 3 months of Yoga intervention, BP, BMI and lipid profile was estimated. The study results showed a statistically significant decrease in Systolic BP, Diastolic BP and BMI after 3 months of Yoga training. The study concluded that a significant decrease in systolic blood pressure and diastolic blood pressure in subjects who have practiced Yoga, Asanas along with pranayama technique for 3 months duration.<sup>7</sup>

### Problem Statement

A study to assess the knowledge and attitude regarding selected alternative systems of medicine among adults in selected urban communities of Guwahati, Assam.

### Objectives

- 1) To assess the knowledge regarding selected alternative systems of medicine among adults in selected urban community of Guwahati.
- 2) To assess the level of attitude regarding selected alternative systems of medicine among adults in selected urban community of Guwahati.
- 3) To find out the correlation between knowledge and attitude of selected alternative systems of medicine among adults in selected urban community of Guwahati.
- 4) To find out an association between knowledge regarding selected alternative systems of medicine among adults with selected demographic variables.
- 5) To find out an association between attitude of selected alternative systems of medicine among adults with selected demographic variables.

### Assumptions

The study assumes that –

- 1) Adults have good knowledge about selected alternative systems of medicine
- 2) Adults have a favourable attitude regarding alternative system of medicine.

### Hypotheses

Hypotheses are to be tested at <0.05 level of significance.

- **H<sub>1</sub>:** There will be significant relationship between knowledge and attitude on selected alternative system of medicine.
- **H<sub>2</sub>:** There will be significant association between knowledge and selected demographic variables.
- **H<sub>3</sub>:** There will be significant association between attitude and selected demographic variables.

### Operational Definitions:

- **Knowledge:** It is the correct response of adults regarding selected alternative system of medicine of selected urban communities which will be measured by using the self structured questionnaire.
- **Attitude:** In this study, it refers to the opinion of adults or a way of thinking or perception towards selected alternative system of medicine.
- **Alternative system of medicine:** Alternative system of medicine is the use of medicines or treatment other than allopathy (conventional medicine). In this study,

alternative system of medicine includes Ayurveda, Homeopathy and Yoga.

- **Adults:** Group of individuals between 20-60 years of age including both male and female residing in selected urban communities.
- **Ayurveda:** Ayurveda is the method of treatment originated in India which is based on lifestyle interventions and natural therapies.
- **Homeopathy:** Homeopathy is a type of alternative medicine which is based on the theory that a substance that causes the symptoms in healthy people will cure the disease in sick people.
- **Yoga:** Yoga is manipulation of body parts in different angles which combines physical exercises, meditation and breathing techniques.

### 3. Methodology

The research approach was Quantitative research approach and descriptive survey design was adopted. This study was carried out in selected urban communities of Guwahati, Assam which comes under Dhirenpara maternity hospital. The target population in this study was the Adults (aged between 20 – 60 years) residing in the selected communities. Sample size of the study was 150 which were calculated by standard statistical formula. Non-probability convenience sampling technique was adopted for the study. The tool of the study was self administered structured questionnaire which consist of - baseline Proforma, self-structured knowledge questionnaire and self-structured attitude scale.

### 4. Analysis and Interpretation

The analysis of data is organized and presented under the following headings:

- **Section I:** Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables of adults.
- **Section II:** Frequency and percentage distribution of level of knowledge regarding selected alternative system of medicine among adults.
- **Section III:** Frequency and percentage level of attitude regarding selected alternative system of medicine among adults.
- **Section IV:** Co-relation between knowledge and attitude of adults regarding selected alternative systems of medicine.
- **Section V:** Association between knowledge regarding selected alternative system of medicine among adults with selected demographic variables and Association between attitude regarding selected alternative system of medicine among adults with selected demographic variables.

**Section I:** Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables of adults, N=150

S. No.	Socio-demographic variables	Frequency distribution of the samples	Percentage distribution of the samples
1	<b>Age (in years)</b>		
	a. 20-30 years	57	38%
	b. 31-40 years	28	18.7%
	c. 41-50 years	37	24.6%

2	d. 51-60 years	28	18.7%
	<b>Gender</b>		
	a. Male	46	30.7%
3	b. Female	104	69.3%
	<b>Religion</b>		
	a. Hindu	128	85.3%
	b. Muslim	16	10.7%
	c. Christian	6	4%
4	d. Others	0	0
	<b>Educational level</b>		
	a. Primary school	9	6%
	b. High school	24	16%
	c. Higher secondary	53	35.3%
	d. Graduate	59	39.4%
	e. Post graduate	5	3.3%
f. Others	0	0	
5	<b>Employment status</b>		
	a. Employed	32	21.3%
	b. Self employed	43	28.7%
6	c. Unemployed	75	50%
	<b>Monthly income of family</b>		
	a. ≥ 1,99, 862	0	0
	b. 99,931 – 1,99,861	1	0.7%
	c. 74,755 – 99,930	1	0.7%
	d. 49,962 – 74,755	13	8.7%
	e. 29,973 – 49,961	59	39.3%
	f. 10,002 - 29,972	66	44%
g. ≤ 10,001	10	6.7%	
7	<b>Information about ASM (Ayurveda, Yoga and Homeopathy)</b>		
	a. Yes	150	100%
	b. No	0	0
7.1	<b>If yes, source of information</b>		
	a. Family/friends/relative	122	81.4
	b. Newspaper/magazines	6	4
	c. Health workers	5	3.3
	d. Television	14	9.3
	e. Others	3	2
8	<b>Use of Ayurvedic, Homeopathic or Yoga therapies by self, family members</b>		
	a. Yes	140	93.3%
	b. No	10	6.7%
8.1	<b>If yes, which</b>		
	a. Ayurveda	40	28.6%
	b. Homeopathy	95	67.8%
	c. Yoga	5	3.6%
9	<b>Preference of system of medicine</b>		
	a. Ayurveda	9	6%
	b. Homeopathy	9	6%
	c. Allopathy	132	88%
	d. Yoga	0	0
	e. Others	0	0

**Section II:** Frequency and percentage distribution of level of knowledge regarding selected alternative system of medicine among adults, N=150

Level of knowledge	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD
Very poor knowledge	25	16.7	11.81	5.717
Poor knowledge	35	23.3		
Moderate knowledge	47	31.3		
Good knowledge	33	22		
Very Good knowledge	10	6.7		
Excellent knowledge	0	0		

**Section III:** Frequency and percentage distribution of level of attitude regarding selected alternative system medicine among adults, N=150

Level of attitude	frequency (f)	Percentage (%)	Mean	SD
Highly favorable	5	3.3	49.9	4.916
Favorable	89	59.4		
Neutral	56	37.3		
Unfavorable	0	0		
Highly unfavorable	0	0		

Attitudinal Item	Strongly Disagree; f (%)	Disagree; f (%)	Neutral; f (%)	Agree; f (%)	Strongly Agree; f (%)
I think positively about alternative systems of medicine (Ayurveda, Homeopathy and Yoga) treatments in general.	0(0)	0(0)	19(13)	116(77)	15(10)
Would visit A licensed and qualified Ayurvedic / Homeopathic practitioner within the allopathic hospital setting.	1(0.67)	52(35)	24(16)	72(48)	1(0.67)
Ayurveda treatments are costly	15(10)	121(81)	8(5)	6(4)	0(0)
Ayurveda treatments are effective over many chronic diseases	0(0)	41(27)	83(55)	18(12)	8(5)
Ayurveda treatments have fewer side effects.	0(0)	0(0)	12(8)	123(82)	15(10)
Regular practice of yoga will increase concentration level.	0(0)	0(0)	19(13)	116(77)	15(10)
Practicing yoga daily will prevent many diseases.	0(0)	0(0)	18(12)	108(72)	24(16)
Practice of yoga is only for saints	53(35)	75(50)	16(11)	6(4)	0(0)
My friends and family members will laugh at me while doing yoga	89(59)	31(21)	20(13)	9(6)	1(0.67)
Yoga is time consuming and less effective	5(3)	108(72)	37(25)	0(0)	0(0)

**Distribution of respondents based on their attitude towards ASM**

Yoga is very difficult to learn	52(35)	56(37)	42(28)	0(0)	0(0)
Would prefer Ayurvedic and Homeopathy treatment over allopathic treatment	14(9)	82(55)	32(21)	22(15)	0(0)
Homeopathic medicine can be used to prevent many diseases.	0(0)	20(13)	68(45)	62(41)	0(0)
Homeopathy treatment is not suitable for chronic diseases.	0(0)	8(5)	10(7)	77(51)	55(37)

The data presented on the above table has revealed that majority of the participants (131) think positively about alternative system of medicine in general; 48% of the participants agreed upon visiting a licensed and qualified Ayurvedic / Homeopathic practitioner within the allopathic hospital setting. Majority of the participant (81%) agreed that alternative systems of medicine are cost-effective, though majority (55%) was unsure of effectiveness of these systems over chronic diseases; 82% of the participants agreed that Ayurveda treatments have fewer side effects. 77% of the participants agreed that regular practice of yoga increases concentration level and 72% agreed that practicing yoga daily will prevent many diseases. Majority of the participants (59%) strongly disagreed that their friends and family will disapprove of them practicing yoga. 41% of the participants agreed that homeopathy can be used in prevention of many diseases but majority of them (51%) agreed that homeopathy is not suitable for treating chronic diseases. Although 55% of the adults disagreed on the

preference of ASM over allopathy and 21% remained neutral about it.

**Section IV:** Co-relation between knowledge and attitude of adults regarding selected alternative systems of medicine.

N=150

Co-relation	Mean	SD	r value	p value
Knowledge	11.81	5.717	0.648	0.001*
Attitude	49.90	4.916		

\*p<0.05 level of significance

Findings showed that mean knowledge score was 11.81±5.717 and mean attitude score was 49.90±4.916. The correlation was done using spearman brown correlation (r=0.648) indicates there is good positive correlation between knowledge and attitude of adults regarding selected alternative system of medicine and (p=0.001) reveals knowledge and attitude among adults was statistically significant at p<0.05 level.

**Section V:** Association between knowledge regarding selected alternative systems of medicine among adults with selected socio-demographic variables, N= 150

Demographic variables	level of knowledge					Chi value	df	p value
	Very Poor	Poor	Moderate	Good	Very Good			
<b>Age in years</b>								
a. 20-30 years	25	32	0	0	0	22.41	12	0.001*
b. 31-40 years	0	3	25	0	0			
c. 41-50 years	0	0	22	15	0			
d. 51-60 years	0	0	0	18	10			
<b>Gender</b>								
a. Male	6	11	14	10	5	2.309	4	0.679 <sup>NS</sup>
b. Female	19	24	33	23	5			
<b>Religion</b>								
a. Hindu	23	22	40	33	10	28.18	8	0.001*

b. Muslim	0	9	7	0	0			
c. Christian	2	4	0	0	0			
d. Others	--	--	--	--	--			
<b>Educational level</b>								
a. Primary school	0	5	4	0	0	39.41	16	<b>0.001*</b>
b. High school	9	10	5	0	0			
c. Higher secondary	9	5	16	16	7			
d. Graduate	6	13	21	16	3			
e. Post graduate	1	2	1	1	0			
f. Others	--	--	--	--	--			
<b>Employment status</b>								
a. Employed	4	3	9	10	6	19.673	8	<b>0.012*</b>
b. Self employed	7	16	13	5	2			
c. Unemployed	14	16	25	18	2			
<b>Monthly income of family</b>								
a. ≥ 1,99, 862	--	--	--	--	--	37.52	20	<b>0.010*</b>
b. 99,931 – 1,99,861	1	0	0	0	0			
c. 74,755 – 99,930	1	0	0	0	0			
d. 49,962 – 74,755	0	1	9	3	0			
e. 29,973 – 49,961	6	12	19	15	7			
f. 10,002 - 29,972	16	16	16	15	3			
g. ≤ 10,001	1	6	3	0	0			
<b>Source of information regarding ASM</b>								
a. Family/friends/relatives	16	31	37	29	9	28.09	16	<b>0.031*</b>
b. Newspaper/magazines	3	2	1	0	0			
c. Health workers	0	0	4	1	0			
d. Television	6	2	2	3	1			
e. Other	0	0	3	0	0			
<b>Previous use of ASM</b>								
a. Yes	20	30	47	33	10	16.83	4	<b>0.002*</b>
b. No	5	5	0	0	0			
<b>If yes, which system they have used</b>								
a. Ayurveda	10	7	12	9	2	25.95	12	0.008*
b. Homeopathy	9	22	32	24	8			
c. Yoga	0	2	3	0	0			
d. No	6	4	0	0	0			
<b>Preference of system of medicine</b>								
a. Ayurveda	1	3	3	2	0	18.17	8	<b>0.020*</b>
b. Homeopathy	1	7	0	1	0			
c. Allopathy	23	25	44	30	10			
d. Yoga	--	--	--	--	--			
e. Others	--	--	--	--	--			

\*p<0.05 level of significance

NS-Non significant

The above table depicts the association between knowledge regarding selected alternative system of medicine among adults with selected demographic variables which was tested by using chi-square test. Results showed that age, religion, educational level, employment status, monthly income of family, information regarding ASM, utilization of Ayurveda,

Homeopathic or Yoga therapies and preference of system of medicine were found statistically significant association at p<0.05 level. Gender is statistically non significant with knowledge regarding selected alternative system of medicine among adults.

**Section V:** Association between attitude regarding selected alternative system of medicine among adults with selected demographic variables, N= 150

Demographic variables	Level of Attitude			Chi value	df	p value
	Neutral	Favorable	High Favorable			
<b>Age in years</b>						
a. 20-30 years	56	1	0	16.56	6	<b>0.001*</b>
b. 31-40 years	0	28	0			
c. 41-50 years	0	37	0			
d. 51-60 years	0	23	5			
<b>Gender</b>						
a. Male	16	29	1	0.537	2	0.764 <sup>NS</sup>
b. Female	40	60	4			
<b>Religion</b>						
a. Hindu	45	78	5	11.34	4	<b>0.023*</b>

b. Muslim	5	11	0			
c. Christian	6	0	0			
d. Others	--	--	--			
<b>Educational level</b>						
a. Primary school	3	6	0	17.17	8	<b>0.028*</b>
b. High school	17	7	0			
c. Higher secondary	14	36	3			
d. Graduate	19	38	2			
e. Post graduate	3	2	0			
f. Others	--	--	--			
<b>Employment status</b>						
a. Employed	7	22	3	9.435	4	0.051 <sup>NS</sup>
b. Self employed	21	21	1			
c. Unemployed	28	46	1			
<b>Monthly income of family</b>						
a. ≥ 1,99, 862	--	--	--	19.31	10	<b>0.036*</b>
b. 99,931 – 1,99,861	1	0	0			
c. 74,755 – 99,930	1	0	0			
d. 49,962 – 74,755	1	12	0			
e. 29,973 – 49,961	18	36	5			
f. 10,002 - 29,972	31	35	0			
g. ≤ 10,001	4	6	0			
<b>Source of information regarding ASM</b>						
a. Family/friends/relatives	43	74	5	13.89	8	0.085 <sup>NS</sup>
b. Newspaper/magazines	5	1	0			
c. Health workers	0	5	0			
d. Television	8	6	0			
e. Other	0	3	0			
<b>Previous use of ASM</b>						
a. Yes	46	89	5	17.98	2	<b>0.001*</b>
b. No	10	0	0			
<b>If yes, which system they have used</b>						
a. Ayurveda	17	22	1	19.35	6	<b>0.004*</b>
b. Homeopathy	27	64	4			
c. Yoga	2	3	0			
d. No	10	0	0			
<b>Preference of system of medicine</b>						
a. Ayurveda	4	5	0	2.104	4	0.717 <sup>NS</sup>
b. Homeopathy	5	4	0			
c. Allopathy	47	80	5			
d. Yoga	-	--	--			
e. Others	-	--	--			

\*p<0.05 level of significance

NS-Non significant

The above table depicts the association between attitude regarding selected alternative system of medicine among adults with selected demographic variables which was tested by using chi-square test. Results showed that age, religion, educational level, monthly income of family, and utilization of ASM were found statistically significant association at p<0.05 level. The other demographic variables such as gender, employment status, information regarding ASM and preference of system of medicine were statistically non significant with attitude regarding selected alternative system of medicine among adults.

## 5. Discussion

### Discussion as per the objective of the study:

**Objective 1 - To assess the knowledge regarding selected alternative systems of medicine among adults in selected urban communities of Guwahati**

The Result of the study revealed that majority 47(31.3%) of subjects had moderate knowledge, followed by 35(23.3%) had poor knowledge, 33(22%) had good knowledge, 25(16.7%) had very poor knowledge and Only 10(6.7%) had very good knowledge regarding selected alternative system of medicine with an average mean score of 11.81 and SD=5.717.

The findings of the study is supported by the study conducted by Ahammed M et al, 2018, “knowledge, attitude and practice of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) among selected adult Bangladeshi population” in which out of 300 respondents majority 150(50%) were found to have moderate knowledge, 75(25%) had good knowledge, 45(15%) had poor knowledge and only 15(5%) had excellent knowledge.<sup>8</sup>

**Objective 2 - To assess the attitude regarding selected alternative systems of medicine among adults in selected urban communities of Guwahati**

The Result of the study revealed that majority 89(59.4%) of subjects had favorable attitude, 56(37.3%) had neutral attitude and only 5(3.3%) had high favorable attitude regarding selected alternative system of medicine with an average mean score was 49.90 and SD=4.916.

Majority of the participants (131) thinks positively about alternative system of medicine in general; 48% of the participants agreed upon visiting a licensed and qualified Ayurvedic / Homeopathic practitioner within the allopathic hospital setting. Majority of the participant (81%) agreed that alternative systems of medicine are cost-effective, though majority (55%) was unsure of effectiveness of these systems over chronic diseases; 82% of the participants agreed that Ayurveda treatments have fewer side effects. 77% of the participants agreed that regular practice of yoga increases concentration level and 72% agreed that practicing yoga daily will prevent many diseases. Majority of the participants (59%) strongly disagreed that their friends and family will disapprove of them practicing yoga. 41% of the participants agreed that homeopathy can be used in prevention of many diseases but majority of them (51%) agreed that homeopathy is not suitable for treating chronic diseases. Although 55% of the adults disagreed on the preference of ASM over allopathy and 21% remained neutral about it.

The findings of the study is also supported by a study conducted by Ozer et al, (2013) in which it is revealed that 83.5% of participants had positive attitude towards alternative therapy methods; 65% of them had neutral attitude and 16.5% of them had negative attitude towards alternative system of medicine.<sup>9</sup>

### **Objective 3 - To find out the correlation between knowledge and attitude of selected alternative systems among adults of selected urban communities of Guwahati.**

Findings of this study showed that mean knowledge score was  $11.81 \pm 5.717$  and mean attitude score was  $49.90 \pm 4.916$ . The correlation was done using spearman brown correlation ( $r=0.648$ ) indicates there is good positive correlation between knowledge and attitude of adults regarding selected alternative system of medicine and ( $p=0.001$ ) reveals knowledge and attitude among adults was statistically significant at  $p<0.05$  level. Increased knowledge will result in better attitude towards alternative system of medicine.

The findings of the study is supported by a study conducted by S. Nataraj, (2013) in Mangalore on assessing knowledge and attitude regarding alternative system of medicine among adults, in which it was found a strong positive correlation co-efficient between knowledge and attitude of selected alternative systems among adults.<sup>10</sup>

### **Objective 4 - To find out the association between knowledge regarding selected alternative systems of medicine among adults with selected demographic variables.**

The Results of the study showed that age, religion, educational level, employment status, monthly income of family, source of information, previous use of alternative system of medicine (Ayurveda, Homeopathic or Yoga therapies) and preference of system of medicine were found

statistically significant association at  $p<0.05$  level. It also showed that gender of the participant was statistically non significant with knowledge regarding selected alternative system of medicine among adults.

The findings were contrast to the study conducted by S. Nataraj (2013) in Mangalore on assessing knowledge and attitude regarding alternative system of medicine among adults, in which it was found that there was no significant relationship between knowledge regarding selected alternative systems of medicine among adults with selected demographic variables.<sup>10</sup>

### **Objective 5 - To find out the association between attitude of selected alternative systems of medicine among adults with selected demographic variables**

Results of the study showed that age, religion, educational level, monthly income of family, previous use of alternative system of medicine were found statistically significant association at  $p<0.05$  level. The other demographic variables such as gender, employment status, preference of system of medicine were statistically non significant with attitude regarding selected alternative system of medicine among adults.

The study results were contrast to the study conducted by S. Nataraj (2013) in Mangalore on assessing knowledge and attitude regarding alternative system of medicine among adults, in which it was found that there was no significant relationship between attitude regarding selected alternative systems of medicine among adults with selected demographic variables such as age, religion, educational status.<sup>10</sup>

## **6. Conclusion**

In the recent times, there has been a resurging interest in the use of complementary and alternative medicine (CAM). The aim of this study was to assess the knowledge and attitude of adults regarding selected alternative system of medicine in selected urban communities in Guwahati, Assam. This study concluded that majority among the samples 47(31.3%) had moderate knowledge, regarding selected alternative system of medicine. Overall attitude of adults regarding selected alternative system of medicine was favourable (59.4%) though various misconceptions are also prevalent. Overall result showed there was a positive correlation between knowledge and attitude. This shows that increase in the knowledge level results in favourable attitude in the adults regarding selected alternative system of medicine. The present study has been supported by a series of other studies which shows that people have moderate to adequate knowledge and favourable attitude towards alternative system of medicine. The findings of this study shows that adequate knowledge and favourable attitude towards alternative systems of medicine will help in promoting scientific practice of these systems to maintain the health of the people.

## **7. Recommendation**

- A similar study can be conducted on large sample size for generalization.

- A comparative study can be conducted to assess the knowledge and attitude of urban and rural adults.
- A study can be conducted on utilization of alternative system of medicine.
- An experimental study can be carried out on the effectiveness of Ayurveda, Yoga and Homeopathy on a particular disease or health condition.
- A study can be conducted to assess the practice regarding alternative system of medicine.

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