

Study of Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP study) on Hijamah (Wet Cupping) Therapy

¹Ghazala Mulla,
²Sufiyan Ahmad Ghawte
and ³K.T. Ajmal

¹Department of Physiology

²Department of Moalijat,
Z.V.M. Unani Medical College &
Hospital, Azam Campus, Camp,
Pune 411001

³Calicut Unani Hospital & Research
Centre, Near Kallai Bridge,
Calicut, Kerala

Abstract

In Unani System of medicine for restoration of health three basic methods of treatments are provided. These are Regimenal therapy, Diet-o-therapy and Pharmacotherapy. Regimenal therapy is widely adopted for management of various diseases. It includes Hijamah (dry & wet cupping), massage, veinesection, leeching and cauterization. "Hijamah" has originated from the Arabic word "Hajm" meaning "sucking". Hijamah is a method of relieving local congestion by applying a partial vacuum that is created in a cup(s), either by heat or by suction. In Hijamah Bil shurt blood is sucked after applying cups to specific areas of the body. Hijamah therapy has strong connotation with Islam. Various Hadith are present in reference to this therapy. The Prophet (PBUH) explained that: "The best medicine with which you treat yourselves is Hijamah, or it is one of the best of your medicines (Al Bukhari, 5371). Hijamah therapy has been used since ancient times in Muslim countries and by Muslim community. However, currently it is also practiced in countries like China, Germany, United State, Australia, Fin land, Vietnam. In India also this therapy has been gaining popularity. To know about the perception of people about this therapy, a Study of Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP study) on Hijamah (wet cupping) therapy has been carried out. The study reveals that more males than females attended the clinic for Hijamah therapy. Awareness about Hijamah was comparable in both, males and females, being 63.4% and 66.7% respectively.

Key words: Unani System of Medicine, Regimenal therapy, Hijamah, KAP study.

Introduction

Population in developing countries largely lacks access to essential therapies hence they seek health care from alternative system of medicine (Pal, 2002). Alternative medicine comprises organized medical wisdom and philosophical systems like Ayurveda, Yoga, Unani, Siddha and Homeopathy etc. In Unani system of Medicine, three basic methods of treatment viz. Diet-o-therapy, Pharmacotherapy, Regimenal therapy have been used. In this system of medicine Regimenal therapy is widely adopted for management of various diseases. The modes of regimental therapy are Hijamah (dry & wet cupping), massage, leeching and cauterization (Hamdani, 1980). KAP- Knowledge, Attitude, Practice, studies have widely been used to provide

*1 Author for correspondence

information about what people know, how they feel and how they behave and act on their feelings. These studies are highly specific, limited in scope and focused on specific health related subjects. Many such studies (more than four hundred) have been used widely in public health service since last forty years. Commonly they are used to assess the utilization and health seeking behavior of communities (Singh, 1994). The present study was thus carried out to ascertain the knowledge, attitude and practice of Hijamah (wet cupping) therapy.

Cupping: Cupping (Hijamah) was greatly advocated by Galen and Hippocrates-Father of medicine (361 B.C.) (Brockbank, 1987; Cule, 1980). "Hijamah" has originated from the Arabic word "Hajm" meaning "sucking". Cupping is a method of relieving local congestion by applying a partial vacuum that is created in a cup(s) (Fig. 1-3), either by heat or by suction (Bayfield, 1839). In Wet cupping blood is sucked after applying cups to specific areas of the body (Cui and Zhang, 1989). Hijamah therapy has strong connotation with Islam. Various Hadith are present in reference to this therapy. As quoted in Sahih Muslim, the Prophet (PBUH) explained that: "The best medicine with which you treat yourselves is Hijamah, or it is one of the best of your medicines (Rippin and Knappert, 1986). In Egypt cupping was used for curative as well as for preventive purpose. This method of treatment in multiple forms spread into medicine throughout Asian and European civilizations (<http://simplyhijama.com>).

In the West, cupping therapy was a part of the basic clinical skills of a doctor until the latter part of the 19th century (William, 2001). Some Eastern European countries such as Poland and Bulgaria have continued to practice cupping therapy till today (<http://wikipedia.org>). Currently cupping therapy is widely practiced in India in major cities like Delhi, Mumbai, Hyderabad, Calicut, Pune, Aligarh, etc.

All medical professionals have distinguished two types of cupping – dry and wet. While Italian physicians favored dry cupping, European and American doctors used wet cupping, which was widely used in western hospitals till 1832. Wet cupping which is more common, in general is a curative approach to disease management whereas dry cupping produces preventive and relaxation effect. Preference varies with practitioners and cultures. (<http://www.britishcuppingsociety.org>, 2008).

Hijamah Bil shurt (Wet cupping): The first documented uses of Hijamah was found in the teachings of Prophet Muhammad (P.B.U.H.) (Dawud, YNM;

Muslim, YNM). Ibn 'Abbas (may Allah be pleased him) reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) said: "Healing is to be found in three things: drinking honey, the knife of the cupper, and cauterization of fire (Al-Bukhaari, 10/136)." Abu Hurayrah (may Allah be pleased with him) reported that the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) said: "Whoever is treated with cupping on the seventeenth, nineteenth or twenty first (of lunar month), will be healed from all diseases (Abu Dawood, 3861; Al-Bayhaqi, 9/340)" The isnad is hasan).

- Hijamah comes from the root al-hajm, which means "sucking", and is used of the action of draining the breast when an infant is suckled.
- Al-hajam is the name given to the cupper.
- Hijamah is the name given to this profession.
- Al-mihjam is the name given to the tool in which blood is collected, or to the knife used by the cupper.

In this alternative form of bloodletting or medicinal bleeding, also called blood cupping, multiple small scratch or incision is made with a lancet prior to the cupping, and the pressure difference extracts blood from the skin (Rippin and Knappert, 1986). Islamic traditional medicine uses this technique. As a result, the practice of cupping therapy has survived in Muslim countries. Hijamah therapy has been used since ancient times in Muslim countries and by Muslim community. However, currently it is also practiced in countries like China, Germany, United States, Australia, Finland, Vietnam (<http://www.healincupping.com/review.htm>). In India also this therapy is gaining popularity. To know about the perception of people about this therapy a Study of Knowledge, Attitude and Practice (KAP study) on Hijamah (wet cupping) therapy has been carried out.

Historical Cups:



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

Modern Cups:



Fig. 1



Fig. 2



Fig. 3

Methodology

A well designed KAP study was done on 62 normal healthy individuals of either sex attending Herbs and Hakim Clinic during the year of 2011-2012 on 17th, 19th and 21st dates of lunar month. Permission was obtained from the ethical committee. The subjects were assured about the confidentiality of the information and their written consent was taken. A structured standardized questionnaire was prepared after consulting experts in the field. It was also translated into local language. Pilot study was carried out and based on the observations and feedback final questionnaire was designed. The investigators were trained for uniformity in collecting data by interviewing. The data collected were scrutinized and systematically organized. Analysis of data were done using SPSS statistical software by statistical professionals. Data presented are in the form of appropriate tables. The tables and their interpretation are presented as follows:

Results and Discussion

Demographic Data

Table 1: Distribution of Studied Population According to Age and Sex

Age (yrs)	Males	%	Females	%
19-29	9	21.9	6	28.6
30-39	17	41.5	5	23.8
40-49	10	24.4	5	23.8
50-60	5	12.2	5	23.8
Total	41	100	21	100

Comments: The study reveals that more males than females attended the clinic for Hijamah therapy. The age range was from 19 to 60 Yrs.

Table 2: Distribution of Studied Population According to Religion

Religion							
Muslim		Hindu		Christian		Total	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
60	96.8	1	1.6	1	1.6	62	100

Comments: As expected most of the patients were Muslims, i.e. 96.8%. There was only one Hindu and one Christian patient, from a total of 62 patients.

Knowledge, Attitude and Practice Study Data

Knowledge

Table 3: Prevalence of Awareness about Hijamah in Studied Population

Awareness	Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%
Yes	26	63.4	14	66.7
No	15	36.6	7	33.3
Total	41	100	21	100

Comments: Awareness about Hijamah was comparable in both, males and females, being 63.4% and 66.7% respectively. Lack of awareness about Hijamah was observed in 22 individuals out of 62.

Table 4: Distribution of Studied Population According to Reason for Opting for Hijamah

Reason for Opting for Hijamah	Suggested by someone		Self Decision		Religious consideration		Total
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
Males	5	12.2	9	22	27	65.8	41
Females	4	19	5	23.8	12	57.2	21

Comments: Religious consideration was the main reason for opting for Hijamah therapy. This may be due to the fact that most of the respondents were Muslims.

Attitude

Table 5: Distribution of Studied Population According to Attitude to Undergo Hijamah Therapy

Attitude to undergo Hijamah	Males		Females	
	No.	%	No.	%
Positive	41	100	21	100
Negative	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	41	100	21	100

Comments: After explaining the procedure the attitude to undergo Hijamah was favorable in 100% respondents.

Practice

All the respondents underwent the procedure of Hijamah. They also accepted to repeat the procedure as per schedule, allocated by the Unani physicians. Hence, acceptance rate was 100%.

Conclusion

There is a revival of interest in alternative systems of medicine, like the Unani system, both by the Government and by the public. Hence, a KAP (Knowledge, Attitude, Practice) study was done to explore the various dimensions of community concepts of Hijamah. This procedure has a religious significance in Islam and was advocated by Prophet (P.B.U.H.). Thus, as expected there was a high degree of awareness in Muslim patients attending the Herbs and Hakim Clinic. The study was carried out during the year 2011-2012. Total numbers of 62 patients were studied. In males awareness was 63.4% and in females it was 66.7% (Table-3). Religious ground was the main reason for opting Hijamah (Males – 65.8% and Females – 57.2% (Table-4). After explaining the procedure in detail by the investigators, the attitude survey revealed that, it was favorable in all respondents i.e. 100% (Table-5). This is further proved by the fact that ultimately all patients of the study programme underwent the procedure and expressed the desire to continue the recommended schedule. This preliminary exploratory study has revealed encouraging baseline data and we suggest more elaborate studies at community level.

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