



## Under Graduates Attitude Towards Siddha System Of Medicine - A Questionnaire Based Study

R.Muthamizharasi<sup>1</sup>, R.Subhashini<sup>2</sup>, R.Sathish<sup>3\*</sup>, R.Madhavan<sup>4</sup>, S.Mathukumar<sup>5</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,5</sup> Sri Sairam Siddha Medical College and Research Centre, West Tambaram, Chennai.

<sup>4</sup> National Institute of Siddha, Chennai.

\*Corresponding Author: **Dr.R.Sathish MD(s)**, Reader,  
Dept. of Sattam Sarantha Maruthuvamum Nanju Maruthuvamum,  
Sri Sairam Siddha Medical College and Research Centre,  
West Tambaram, Chennai.

E-mail: [sathizkannan@gmail.com](mailto:sathizkannan@gmail.com)

### Abstract

**Background:** Siddha system of medicine is increasingly being used because they are perceived to be free of side effects. It is important that students should be made aware of their system of medicine. In this contest present study was undertaken among under graduate Siddha students to assess the knowledge and attitude towards the use of Siddha system of medicine.

**Methods:** A detailed questionnaire having 18 questions to assess student's perception, awareness and knowledge on Siddha system of medicine was given to 65, III years and Compulsory Rotatory Residential Internship (CRRI) Doctors of Sri Sairam Siddha Medical College and Research Centre. Ethical approval was obtained from the Principal. Data was expressed as percentage, pie chart and Bar Diagrams<sup>5</sup>.

**Results:** A total response rate (65) was observed out of which 21% of the study population was Males and 79% was females. Siddha system of medicine is popular in Tamil Nadu (72%) than in India (9%) because of the minimal language skills (other than English and Tamil (31%)) of the students. Though respondents (86%) have basic computer skills they were unaware of websites and software's related to Siddha system (44%). Students (65%) were confident to give a lecture in a conference or to a public still 57% have not attended any such conferences or present any papers. They are equipped to handle patients with external therapies (74%) and diagnose a disease by Envagaithervu (Siddha diagnostic tool) (55%). Students Scope of earning money after UG (57%) increased the preference of master degree in Siddha (63%) than any other fields(40%). Though Siddha medicines are quite expensive (54%) students more likely prefer them for their self-use (86%). Students raised a positive approach of preparing medicines (60%) as per the literature.

**Conclusion:** This baseline survey reveals the attitude, knowledge and perception of the students towards Siddha system of medicine. At overall students had a positive attitude towards Siddha System of Medicine. They should also be sensitized about their responsibility concerns.

**Keywords:** Siddha, Attitude, Questionnaire, CRRI, Pie chart, Bar Diagram, Envagaithervu.

## Introduction

Traditional Medicine has played a key role in meeting the demands of health care in many developing countries and its use has increased worldwide<sup>1</sup>. The terms complementary/alternative/non-conventional medicine are used interchangeably with traditional medicine in some countries” (WHO, 2002)<sup>2</sup>

Especially in Tamil Nadu Traditional Siddha System of Medicine played a important role in the health care scenario of the people. Acceptance and awareness of traditional system highly increased<sup>3</sup>. Siddha is an idol health care structure which was given by supernatural beings to the society.

Now a days it's growth rate is increased among the people of India. Government sector provides many resources for the development of the system throughout the Nation<sup>4</sup>. Many researchers done a immense work on this area. Not only a Siddha physician and a Siddha allied peoples, Peoples from many other ground, do the most excellent works on Siddha system of medicine. Standardization, Toxicological, pharmacological and Many Human Trials were conducted globally.

But there are very limited work done on the survey concerning study in the system. Regulation for implementation on rational use of Siddha medications, and its usages among students and their families and current status of Siddha studying population and their future needs could provide identity of state of mind on Siddha system of medicine<sup>5</sup>. This study will also play a important role in the future development of Siddha

system of medicine among the students community and the public.

So in order to provide insight into the use of Siddha medicine and examine issues surrounding them, a questionnaire based study was undertaken among the III year and CRRI of BSMS course to assess the awareness about Siddha medicine and its prevalence while studying.

The questionnaire was distributed to Sri Sairam Siddha Medical College and Research Centre students by the co students who were trained to collect necessary and unbiased information from the students. A total response rate (65) was observed out of which 21% of the study population was Males and 79% was females participated in the study without any hesitation.

## Methods

The study was conducted among III year and CRRI doctors in Sri Sairam Siddha Medical College and Research Centre. A detailed questionnaire consisting of 18 questions (Section B) with two options (Yes or No) was given to each of students and demographic profile of the respondent obtained as Section A<sup>5</sup>. The questionnaire was based on student's attitude regarding Siddha system of medicine. Students were asked to tick the options which ever they felt was most appropriate without revealing their identity in the questionnaire. The completed questionnaires were collected and analyzed for data. Data was expressed as percentages, pie charts and Bar diagrams. Ethical approval was obtained from the Principal of the college.

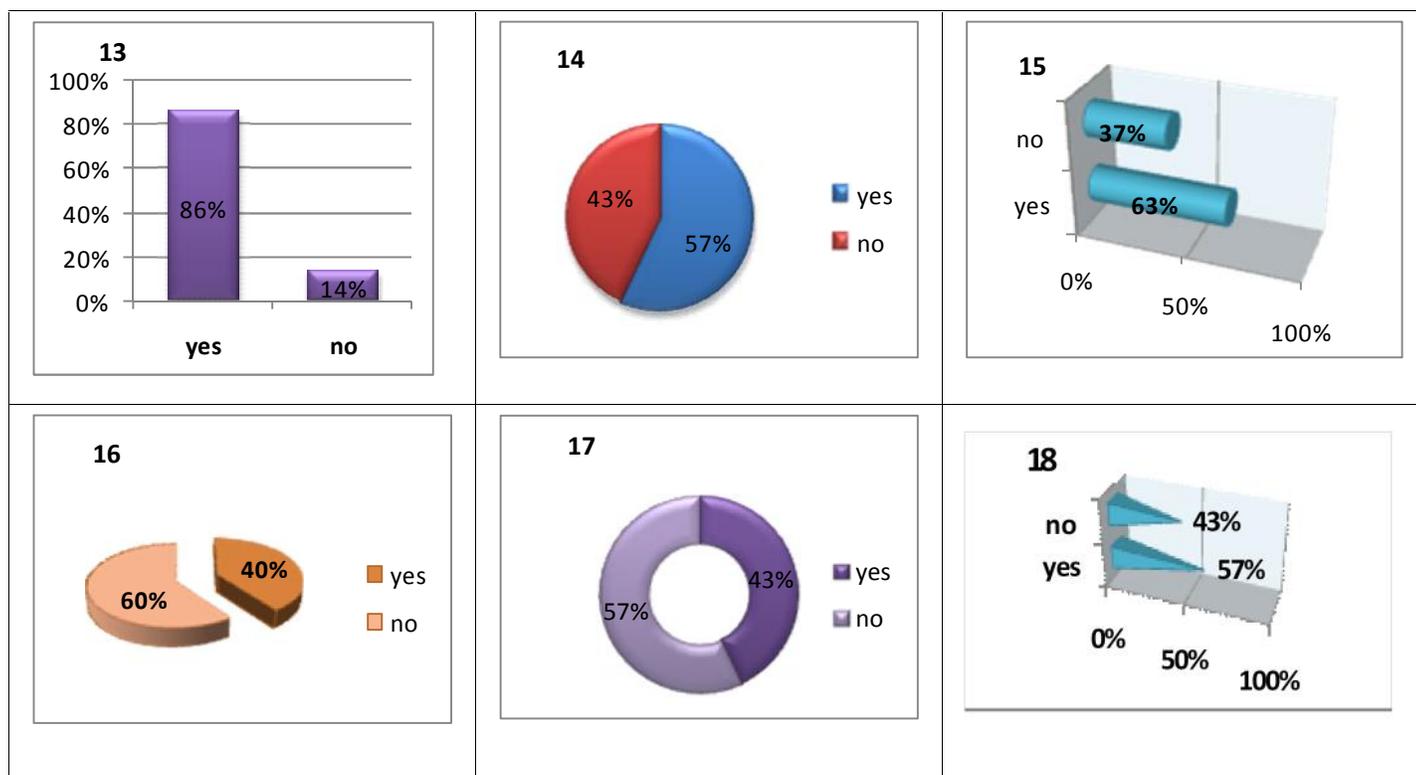
**Table 1. Section B. Questionnaire consisting of 18 questions**

1. Do you have basic computer skills?
2. Do you know languages other than English and Tamil?
3. Do you think Siddha system is popular in Tamil Nadu?
4. Do you think Siddha system is popular all over India?
5. Can you give a lecture about our system in a conference or to a public?
6. Do you need our books to be re-edited?
7. Can you prepare our Medicines as per Literature?
8. Can you able to explain the medical reports like X-Ray, ECG, EEG?
9. Can you able to diagnose the disease by Envagaithervu?
10. Can you give counselling to the patients?
11. Can you handle patients by external therapies?
12. Do you think our Siddha medicines are expensive?
13. Do you prescribe Siddha medicines for you and to your family?
14. Do you have a scope of earning money after completion of BSMS?
15. Will you study master degree in Siddha?
16. Will you choose any other Master Degree in medical field?
17. Did you attend any conference and paper presentations?
18. Do you know about any famous websites and Software related to our system?

**Results and Discussion**

**Table 2.** 1 – 18 figures represent diagrammatic answers corresponding to the questions in Table 1

<p><b>1</b></p> <p>14% 86%</p> <p>■ yes ■ no</p>	<p><b>2</b></p> <p>31% 69%</p> <p>■ yes ■ no</p>	<p><b>3</b></p> <p>28% 72%</p> <p>■ yes ■ no</p>
<p><b>4</b></p> <p>100% 50% 0% 9% 91%</p> <p>yes no</p>	<p><b>5</b></p> <p>35% 65%</p> <p>■ yes ■ no</p>	<p><b>6</b></p> <p>no 13% yes 87%</p> <p>0% 50% 100%</p>
<p><b>7</b></p> <p>no 40% yes 60%</p> <p>0% 50% 100%</p>	<p><b>8</b></p> <p>26% 74%</p> <p>■ yes ■ no</p>	<p><b>9</b></p> <p>45% 55%</p> <p>■ yes ■ no</p>
<p><b>10</b></p> <p>100% 50% 0% 86% 14%</p> <p>yes no</p>	<p><b>11</b></p> <p>26% 74%</p> <p>■ yes ■ no</p>	<p><b>12</b></p> <p>46% 54%</p> <p>■ yes ■ no</p>



Totally, 18 questionnaires were filled out and analyzed along with demographic profile of the respondent,

**Section A .Demographic profile of respondents:**

1. Sex of respondents : Female-51 Male-14
2. Year of studying : III Year- 45 CRRI  
Doctors-20
3. Place of current residence: Day Scholar-53  
Hosteller- 12
4. Number of family members: Up to Three  
Members- 14  
More Than Three  
Members - 51

**Section B. Questionnaires with analysis:**

86% of students having computer skills so they must need to know how to apply the skill for the development of Siddha System. The fact of the matter is majority of opportunities in society need any manner of computer skill. Lack in this criteria leads to unemployment. Alex Johnson, a reporter said, who don't have computer skills and internet access were the ones" suffering the fastest rise in unemployment"<sup>6</sup>. So the Students must develop their computer skills.

For 2<sup>nd</sup> 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> questions having the same core. The Siddha Medicine has to reach People widely for which Language Skills must be developed by own interest .Sticking only to the Tamil language is our major drawback. Majority accepted the unpopularity of Siddha medicine all over India for which one Siddha college in each state can be established to overcome and of course of learning many languages. This may popularise Siddha System all over the world.

As most of the students are from 3rd Year their knowledge of giving a lecture is minimal compared to CRRI. This is the reason for 35% fall to give a lecture about our system. We must thank our faculties for gaining knowledge on this system. In Addition, conferences, interactive sessions and debate can be made as a part of students curriculum.

Unedited Text books are the setback of Siddha system. Re-Edition of Old books yet to be done with clear figures, flow charts and updated on texts and contents. But in current course outline includes many additional subjects to get knowledge. Grateful to our Syllabus committee and the Government for adding up syllabus. Siddha pocket dictionaries with basic terms should be given to every students. A Siddha encyclopaedia should be made available for easy reference of every common man.

Majority of positive feedback on Medicine preparation reveals the strong attitude of the students. In addition to this preparation of medicines can be given in a Technical and Practical thesis. 74 % of Positive feedback were from CRRRI 26% were from 3rd Year students on studying diagnostic tools like X-Ray, ECG. III Year students can able to get a knowledge at their internship level. A Siddha doctor has to be given a technical and a practical knowledge about the advance techniques that will use in diagnostic point of view.

Considering the Envagaithervu, students were strong enough but still more separate books on envagaithervu diagnosis will help in the practice of accurate diagnosis of Disease .Counselling to the patient is of immense important for their Quick Recovery. This can be achieved by several op sessions and medical camps. The Students are trained well which in turn gave 86% of Positive Feedback. All Credits to the faculties.

In Siddha system of medicine there are 32 external therapies. In Order to handle with External Therapies, enough number of patients is essential for which the students has to be exposed to various medical camps and OP and IP sessions. The Students are trained well which in turn gave 74% of Positive Feedback.

The Cost Factor may be due to the Unavailability of Raw Drugs and Plants. This can only be achieved by our government, so no need to concentrate at this point. As per the availability of raw drugs cost may differ. 57% Majority have the scope of earning good money after finishing UG. 100% scope can be obtained by doing Post graduation in Siddha or in other PG medical degrees. Choosing other medical fields also helps in earning process.

Majority said no for attending or Presenting papers in conferences. By attending conferences or presenting papers, we can update our medical knowledge and gather information's about other systems.

Arising healthy questions leaves the way for improvization of research in Siddha. Students can be encouraged to present papers by providing rewards and points in their academic.

Major lack is, there is no standard websites and software for any section of our system. If standard websites and software are made available all details can be obtained and accessed by any One, anywhere and any Time. The above criteria if being fulfilled, the

world open its eyes on this major area of Medical System.

## Conclusion

This baseline survey reveals the attitude, knowledge and perception of the students towards Siddha system of medicine. We have examined the issues surrounding to some possible extent and discussed some of the ways that can be solved. There is a need of imparting a wide range of knowledge among them by implementing new version of ideas for updating the system. Importance ought to be given for the communication skills that take our system to the next level. Utilization of the computer skills leaves a way of popularizing Siddha globally. Exposure and participation of the students in variety of fields helps in a good recognition of the system politically. Self-utilization of the medicines by the Siddha physicians creates awareness among the society. Improvisation of Raw drug identification sector safeguards the uniqueness of medicine as per literature. There by, it is our exclusive responsibility to extract and cherish the essence of Siddha system of medicine.

## Acknowledgments

The Author wish to Thank Mr. Sai Prakash Leo Muthu, CEO, Sairam group of Institutions and Mr.R.Sathish kumar, Co-Ordinator and Our Principal Dr.S.Mathukumar for providing the facilities to carryout the survey.

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<b>DOI:</b> <a href="https://doi.org/10.22192/ijarbs.2016.03.11.030">10.22192/ijarbs.2016.03.11.030</a>	

**How to cite this article:**

R.Muthamizharasi, R.Subhashini, R.Sathish, R.Madhavan, S.Mathukumar. (2016). Under Graduates Attitude Towards Siddha System Of Medicine - A Questionnaire Based Study. Int. J. Adv. Res. Biol. Sci. 3(11): 241-246.

**DOI:** <http://dx.doi.org/10.22192/ijarbs.2016.03.11.030>