



COMPLEMENTARY THERAPIES BMHP5001

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Assessment2: Acupuncture

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Introduction

This assessment focuses on complementary therapy within the healthcare sector. Furthermore, this particular assessment is based on complementary acupuncture within the different healthcare sectors of the UK. The purpose of this assessment is to emphasize the importance of acupuncture within the health sector of the UK. As well as, to observe the significance of acupuncture which heals the problems of the human body along with it can be used for cosmetic purposes. The assessment has focused on the overview, uses, and history of complementary therapy. Moreover, this assessment has covered up the efficiency and contradiction of complementary acupuncture. This assessment has also observed the comparison between complementary acupuncture and traditional treatment. This report will be illuminated by the membership bodies along with the required ethical consideration within the complementary acupuncture field.

An overview of complementary therapies

Complementary therapies can be used besides conventional and mainstream medicine-related therapy. Five stages are included within complementary therapy. These stages are the alternative medical systems, main body interventions, treatment based on the biological factors, manipulative as well the body based method and the energy therapy (Mbizo *et al.* 2018). Complementary therapy is based on alternative medicines or alternative healing therapies. These will be focused on acupuncture, acupressure and Ayurveda. On the other side, it is also important to say that nowadays the complementary therapy has been focused on Acupuncture which mainly focuses on the uses of different types of needles that are used to cure human body-related problems. Acupuncture is a millennial therapeutic method, it is about the art of healing that combines oriental philosophy with the application of metal needles in precise points of the human body. As well, it will be emphasized on cosmetic enhancement by healing the problems. It has thereby been established that the complementary therapies within the nursing sector have been focused on reflexology, acupuncture, yoga, reiki and aromatherapy.

The history of Acupuncture

Complementary and alternative medical practices are seen flourishing over recent years despite the importance of scientific research. It has been evident that the traditional therapies are accompanied by a modern and scientific touch to provide relief to the modern people. Acupuncture is a 2000 years old branch of Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) that follows a treat for reviving pain by inserting needles of various types in several parts of the body. As per the Chinese tradition, it is believed that diseases often create an imbalance to 'vital energy' of our body, yin-yang and also the five elements namely water, earth, fire, wood and metal. Since anatomy was forbidden at that time in Chinese culture, 12 median points were identified based on the rivers flowing in China and 365 acupuncture points were identified based on astrological calculations (PaCE, 2012).

The uses of Acupuncture

Acupuncture is used for relieving pain that is essentially associated with different types of diseases like Chemotherapy, dental pain, headaches, pain in the neck, osteoarthritis, respiratory disorders and low back pain. As per the Chinese belief, Qi flows through the meridian within the body of the human and these meridians can be accessed through 350 acupuncture points. Thus, inserting needles in these points through different combinations help in bringing back the energy flow into proper balance (Mayo Clinic, 2020). Although there seems to be limited proof of the proper existence of the acupuncture points some experts have essentially linked acupuncture with neuroscience for its proper explanation. In contemporary form, acupuncture points are identified as the points through which muscles, nerves, and connective tissues can be activated. This stimulation aids in increasing the flow of blood thereby triggering the natural pain killer of the body (Medical News Today, 2020).

In this regard, Chan *et al.* (2016) have pointed out that acupuncture possesses two types of benefits and they are controlling pain and the existence of little side effects. Several research participants mentioned that acupuncture has helped in relieving headaches, back pains, insomnia as well as digestive disorders. Also, it has been identified that acupuncture is effective for patients who have suffered strokes. Earlier in 2003, World Health Organisation (WHO) has pointed out that acupuncture has been effective in treating patients with higher or lower blood pressure, painful period, dysentery, rheumatoid arthritis, dental pain and even also helps in reducing the risk of strokes (Medical News Today, 2020). Thus, acupuncture with its modern touch has turned out to be an important contemporary complementary therapy.

The efficacy and contraindications of complementary acupuncture

There are some questions and doubts within the complementary acupuncture field. These doubts are based on the functions of the needle inserting or it may be focused on the scientific proof of the acupuncture. Some studies have partially proved the scientific significance of the acupuncture points within the human body for relieving pain. Several skeptics have shown that acupuncture creates the effect of placebo as the claimed meridians and their energy which is described as TCM cannot be observed, dissected, or assessed with anatomic approaches (Sierpina and Frenkel, 2005). There is no scientific proof that the medians exist but also there is no proof that they do not but some studies show that acupuncture can be helpful for a certain condition. The absence of scientific support has limited the usage and spread of acupuncture (Medical News Today, 2020).

There exist several arguments that uphold the importance of acupuncture for relieving pain. For instance, The British Medical Journal published showed a review in the year 2009 that showed the impact of acupuncture in relieving pain. Also, fifty-seven systematic reviews of the topics which were published in the International Association for the Study of Pain showed that there have been small but convincing evidence that acupuncture is effective in the reduction of pain. It has also been shown by isolated studies that acupuncture shows best results when used with conventional therapies for back and neck pain (PaCE, 2012). Also, acupuncture research trials were conducted by the National Centre of Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM) that showed essential evidence of the effectiveness of the acupuncture as illustrated in the table below (Sierpina and Frenkel, 2005):

Well-demonstrated evidence of effectiveness	Potentially useful
Chemotherapy-induced nausea	Addiction
Dental pain	Asthma
Nausea of pregnancy	Carpal tunnel syndrome
Postoperative nausea	Epicondylitis
	Fibromyalgia
	Headache
	Low back pain
	Menstrual cramps
	Stroke rehabilitation

Table 1: National Institutes of Health Consensus Panel

The above table essentially makes it evident that acupuncture has proved to be fruitful for certain pains. Also, WHO addressed the potential benefits of Acupuncture in more than 40 medical conditions (Appendix 1) (Sierpina and Frenkel, 2005). Consequently, it can be mentioned that there are numerous pieces of evidence to show the benefits of acupuncture in treating different pains.

Comparison between complementary acupuncture and traditional treatment

This section will be emphasized on the comparison between complementary acupuncture along and traditional treatment therapy. Apart from that, the section will also be focused on the similarity as well as the difference between acupuncture and the traditional treatment. The first part will be focused on the similarities of acupuncture with traditional treatment. The second part will be covered up with the difference between these two sections.

The similarities between complementary acupuncture and the traditional treatment:

Complimentary - acupuncture	Traditional treatment
• Acupuncture has some ingredients (especially the needles) for reducing the pains of the human body. • The complementary acupuncture reduces the problems such as pain in the neck, back, menstrual cramps and also reduces the chances of strokes by ensuring proper blood flow (Vickers <i>et al.</i> 2018)	• The traditional treatment has focused on the ingredients such as the different types of medicines which focuses on the curing or reducing of different types of human health problems. • The traditional treatment method reduces or cures most of the health problems of the human body.

Table 1: The similarities between complementary acupuncture and the traditional treatment

(Source: Created by the Learner)

The difference between acupuncture and traditional treatment:

Complimentary- acupuncture	Traditional treatment
• Complementary and Alternative Medicine (CAM) focuses on therapies such as deep breathing exercises, yoga, ta chi and qi gong. Furthermore, manipulative therapy as well the acupuncture. • The CAM focuses on the strengthening of the relationship between the service taker and the service giver. Along with this, Complementary and Alternative Medicine build trust (PaCE, 2012).	• The traditional treatment emphasizes acupuncture, Ayurveda, Homeopathy, Neuropathy, Chinese, and oriental medicine. • The traditional treatment is still important because the stages of the traditional treatment have some scientific base. Along with this, traditional medicines help to cure or reduce chronic diseases as well as psychological diseases.

Table 2: The difference between acupuncture and the traditional treatment

(Source: Created by the Learner)

An evaluation of the statutory self-regulation system and the voluntary self-regulation system

In the complementary treatment professions, two categories of legislation are applicable: voluntary self-regulation and statutory regulation. Statutory control is recommended for treatments where the likelihood of poor practice is greater for the public. Many complementary treatments prefer a voluntary method of self-regulation as the best path for their treatment. The purpose of the legislation is to create a national level of teaching, management and skill for the safety of the public and advice of professionals and employers that is professionally defined and autonomous for each occupation.

Statutory self-regulation system

Statutory regulation when an organization under the Law Act is inspected by the government (Ijaz and Boon, 2018). It is an offense when a trade that is governed by law is practiced without being registered for this occupation. Where an occupation is not ruled by law, it is also regulated voluntarily. For instance, the House of Lords has considered acupuncture and herbal medicines as therapies that should be practiced under the Health Act 1999. For this, the main groups of the complementary and the alternative practitioners have developed degree courses that would be validated by the Universities. Also, different professional groups are strengthening the precedent laid down by the British Acupuncture Accreditation Board (Mills, 2001). Also, the British Acupuncture Council emphasizes statutory regulations of HM and TCM as it considers without these regulations there would be much confusion related to its usage among the patients. The BCAC is essentially pleased for describing acupuncture as robust self-regulation but at the same also hopes it obtain the same scope as the statutorily regulated providers (Acupuncture UK, 2021).

Voluntary self-regulation system

The regulation of professional activity like acupuncture seems to be quite important. Thus, registration with the professional body provides the general public with specific guidelines regarding the training standards that someone has to achieve for belonging to a register, understanding of basic requirements of the skills and the ways they are accountable towards the performance of delivering the proper service. A voluntary self-regulation system is the protection of the function which ensures that none other than license holding practitioners can provide acupuncture therapy. It has been evident that the nature of statutory regulations has

changed over time. It was earlier a professional recognition but now it has concentrated on the protection of the public and more recently included the consideration of the risks (British Acupuncture Council, 2021).

The British Common Law covers alternative treatment procedures. The medical industry sets criteria for complementary therapy to undermine the creativity and growth of complementary therapy. Further therapies are without assistance and connections to additional funding from specialized organizations such as Skills for Health, the Fund for Integrated Health Prince of Wales and agencies, Skills for Health, Description for complementary treatment, basic requirements for responsible, healthy and successful practice. The healthcare law includes the establishment of teaching, practice and registry rules and guidelines, as well as the application of complaints handling protocols and disciplinary procedures (Abbott *et al.* 2017).

Ethical considerations

This section will be focused on the ethical consideration, which is based on acupuncture. First of all, the risks of acupuncture need to be considered. After that, this has been observed that the health problems are focusing on muscle cramps, nausea and headache, the patient who has high or low blood pressure (Basu, 2020). Along with this, it has also been focused on the patient who is suffering from stroke, osteoarthritis, migraine, and chemotherapy. On the other side, it has also been observed that the contradiction due to acupuncture may arise to the pregnant woman and the children who are below 5 years old.

This can be said that there are some codes of ethics within the field of acupuncture. These ethics are the conducting of the whole acupuncture session within a professional and ethical manner (Allais *et al.* 2019). Apart from that, another ethical consideration will be focused on the representation of the honest educational certificate along with the qualification within the acupuncture-based field. The code of ethics for correctly using and inserting needles would ensure proper benefits. It has thereby been observed that the maintenance of this ethical consideration will help to achieve a better future of acupuncture.

Recommendations

This can be recommended that there are some recommended strategies within the acupuncture field and these are based on the strategic inserting of the needles in the body at specific points.

The identified recommendations are (Ijaz and Boon, 2019):

- While opting for acupuncture, it is quite important to consider that the practitioners make some academic and administrative considerations that make him or her to rightly insert the needles for relieving the pains.
- The trainer needs to focus on safe needling techniques that include a correct selection of needles, right insertion, understanding depth, duration and manipulation, and correct withdrawal as well as contraindications of needling.
- It is important to speak with the practitioner and discuss all the symptoms that may help him or her to understand the pain areas and also should have an idea about the lifestyle and behaviors. Before inserting the needles, the practitioner should closely examine the body parts and have an idea about the shape and color of the tongue as well as the color of the face. Also, the pulse rate needs to be assessed before inserting the needles.

Conclusion

It can be concluded that the assessment was based on the CAM (Contemporary and Alternative Medicine) therapy whereas the assessment has focused on the particular field of acupuncture. The assessment has focused on the overview of the complementary therapies whereas the portion has focused on the different types of complementary therapy with brief contexts. Furthermore, the history of acupuncture has emphasized the short and important inventions of needle inserting. Along with this, it has also been observed that the versatile use of acupuncture. Along with this, the assessment has also been recognized the efficacy or the scientific functions of the needle inserting for relieving pains. Furthermore, this assessment has also been covered up with the contradiction of inserting needles with chronic diseases. The assessment has also observed which issues can be solved by implementing acupuncture therapy. The assessment has also observed the comparison of the CAM along with the traditional therapy in terms of similarities and differences. This has also been focused on two different bodies of legislation. As well, it has also observed the ethical recommendations along with the general recommendation. So, it has thereby been concluded that the report has identified both the issues and their solutions which may focus on the future success of the acupuncture field.

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Appendix 1

Respiratory tract

- Acute sinusitis
- Acute rhinitis
- Common cold
- Acute tonsillitis

Gastrointestinal disorders

- Spasm of the esophagus and cardia
- Hiccup
- Gastroparesis
- Acute and chronic gastritis
- Gastric hyperacidity
- Chronic duodenal ulcer (pain relief)
- Acute and chronic colitis
- Acute bacillary dysentery
- Constipation
- Diarrhea
- Paralytic ileus

Bronchopulmonary disorders

- Acute bronchitis
- Bronchial asthma (most effective in children and in patients without complicating diseases)

Neurologic disorders

- Headache
- Migraine
- Trigeminal neuralgia
- Facial palsy (early stage, ie, within 3–6 mo)
- Paresis after stroke
- Peripheral neuropathies
- Sequelae of poliomyelitis (early stage, ie, within 6 mo)
- Meniere disease
- Neurogenic bladder dysfunction
- Nocturnal enuresis
- Intercostal neuralgia

Disorders of the eye

- Acute conjunctivitis
- Central retinitis
- Myopia (in children)
- Cataract (without complications)

Musculoskeletal disorders

- Cervicobrachial syndrome
- Frozen shoulder
- Tennis elbow
- Sciatica
- Low back pain
- Osteoarthritis

Disorders of the mouth

- Toothache, postextraction pain
 - Gingivitis
 - Acute and chronic pharyngitis
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Table 2: World Health Organization indications for acupuncture

(Source: Sierpina and Frenkel, 2005)