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COMPARATIVE STUDY ON SIDDHA EXTERNAL THERAPY KURUTHIVAANGAL (BLOOD LETTING) WITH CUPPING THERAPY (HIJAMA) MENTIONED IN UNANI SYSTEM

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ABSTRACT

Introduction: Siddha system of medicine is one of the oldest traditions of health care in the Indian sub-continent and well documented and replete with novel therapeutic interventions and treatment modalities. According to the mode of application, the Siddha medicines could be categorized into two classes: Aga marundhugal (Internal medicine) and Pura marundhugal (External medicine). External therapy procedures are as important as in the management of Health and Disease. Most of these therapies are aimed at maintaining a healthy balance of three humors Vali, Azhal, Iyyam and also the seven tissue types of the body. Kuruthivaangal (Blood Letting) is an external method of application of sharp instruments to leak or remove the blood from the abscess, cyst, keloid or the area where the accumulated blood is seen. In this type of treatment, a minor incision is made on the blood vessel and the excess of blood is let out. Cupping therapy (Hijama) is an ancient form of alternative medicine in which a therapist puts special cups on your skin for a few minutes to create suction, the skin is gently drawn upwards by creating a vacuum in a cup over the target area of the skin.

Materials and Methods: This study generates knowledge about the analogy between both Kuruthivaangal (Blood Letting) and Cupping therapy by comparison through classical texts and peer reviewed journals. **Result:** This study reveals the comparison of Kuruthivaangal (Blood Letting) with Cupping therapy preferably would be the raising awareness among practitioners more on technical parts of Blood Letting.

Key words: Siddha, External therapy, Kuruthivaangal (Blood Letting), Cupping therapy.

INTRODUCTION

Siddha system of medicine is one of the oldest traditions of health care in the Indian sub-continent and well documented and replete with novel therapeutic interventions and treatment modalities. This codified medical system has both Internal medicines (Aga Marundhu 32) and External modalities of treatment (Pura Marundhu 32).⁽¹⁾ Kuruthivaangal (Blood Letting) is one of the types of Siddha external therapy. As per Siddha literature, Theran tharu, Surgery is classified into 19 types which includes Blood Letting as one of the subtypes explained in the following lines⁽²⁾

Blood Letting is an external method of application of sharp instruments to leak or remove the blood from the abscess, cyst, keloid or the area where the extravasated and altered blood is seen. Blood Letting is done in conditions where there is accumulation of blood with or without mixed with abnormal tissue fluid. The ancients supposedly were conversant with the concept of exchanging the abnormal with fresh blood. When they found that an ailment has

arisen due to derangement of blood impurity, they resorted to blood Letting on a limited scale at a time ensuring generation of fresh blood for replenishment by the system. Blood Letting is done in snake bite, other conditions of envenomation, hepatomegaly and splenomegaly. It is contraindicated during the times of rain, heavy wind and cold weather. Should there be excessive bleeding after procedure, astringent powders like *Quercus infectoria* (Maasikkaai), *Acacia catechu* (Kaaichukatti), *Areca catechu* (Paakku), *Terminalia chebula* (Kadukkaai) and alum powders are dusted and a compress is made with sterile gauze. ⁽³⁾

Cupping or Hijama (means to suck) where blood is drawn from the body parts to relieve internal congestion. Here the cups can be of various shapes including balls or bells and may range in size from 1-3 inches (25-76mm) across the opening. Plastic and glass are the most common materials used today, replacing the horn, bamboo cups and bronze used in the earlier times. ⁽⁴⁾ Eyes are the most valuable organ of the human body, which process the images of objects in the vicinity. They perceive size, shape, color and distance of the objects and give a 3D picture of the objects visible. Blood-letting is used in curing some diseases and also treats eye diseases like growth inside eyelids and glaucoma and in Cupping therapy for the treatment of sty. ^(2,5) Many articles have been published exclusively about both Kuruthivaangal (Blood Letting) and Cupping therapy but there is no work published comparing the review of both therapies.

OBJECTIVE

To compare the Siddha external therapy Kuruthivaangal (Blood Letting) with Cupping therapy in Unani system of medicine.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Grey literatures and Scientific evidences were searched and information's were collected and few are given below

**PREVIOUS STUDIES IN
KURUTHIVAANGAL
(BLOOD LETTING)**

- 4 review articles were done

**PREVIOUS STUDIES IN
CUPPING THERAPY**

- 381 scientific studies, 127 RCSs (33%), 3 meta-analyzes (1%), 135 non-randomized trials (35%), 30 reviews (8%), 15 questionnaire studies (4%), 64 case reports (17%) and 7 other studies (2%) . [6]

According to *Agasthiyar nayanavidhi -500, Nagamuṇivar nayanavidhi -200* ⁽⁷⁾

- In Pillam (growth inside eyelids) get increased expert's advices to do Blood Letting at the sides of the eye of two rice lengths.
- If the eyelids and eyebrows are heavy, hold with your fingers, if the water shrinks, judge it as a pimple and hold the eyelid tightly and prick it and squeeze and then poke it to drain the blood and apply oil or ghee in the poked area. After giving time to be processed, green camphor should be ground with ghee, applied to a cloth and pasted on the lid and smoked, and this should be done for eight days.
- In Kansoolai (ophthalmalgia) then mark the forehead vein and get blood.

According to *Siddhar Aruvai Maruthuvam*

Parparogam (Eye Disease due to tissue growth on inner side of Eyelid)

Neer parparogam is cured by blood Letting. This involves incising the blood vessel in the eyebrow and letting the blood.

Nethiravayu (Glaucoma)

Symptoms: Redness in the sclera of the eye with pain in eye brow and a runny nose.

Medicine: Here bloodletting is done in central vein and oil bath is given for further management.

According to Practical Guide to Cupping Therapy, A Natural Approach to heal through Traditional Chinese Medicine:

Stye

Stye, i.e., hordeolum, includes symptoms like eyelid itching and redness, with a touchable small induration in wheat-like shape and with obvious tenderness. Local swelling and pain can aggravate and gradually develop into pus, and the symptoms will be alleviated after the pus is discharged following ulceration or cutting of pus head.

To prevent stye, one should pay attention to eye hygiene, and do not rub eyes with the hands to avoid bringing bacteria into the eyes and causing infection. Do not squeeze pus head when it appears, so as not to cause infection. One can prick the ear tip to bleed 5-10 drops to quickly alleviate the symptoms. A professional physician may be invited to practice this method.

The cupping should be performed on the Taiyang, Yangbai, Dazhui, Ganshu, Weishu, and Taichong points.

Cupping Methods

1. Taiyang Point

Location: In the depression about 1 cun behind the space between the outer tip of the brow and outer eye corner.

Method: Select a cup of appropriate size and cup on Taiyang point using the flash cupping method for 10-15 times.

2. Yangbai Point

Location: Directly in line with the pupil, 1 cun above the eyebrow on the forehead.

Method: Select a cup of appropriate size and cup on Yangbai point using the flash cupping method for 10-15 times.

3. Dazhui Point

Location: Under the spinous process of the seventh cervical vertebrae.

Method: Select a cup of appropriate size and apply it to Dazhui point. Retain the cup for 10-15 minutes.

4. Taichong Point

Location: On the foot in a notch between the first and second metatarsal bones.

Method: Select a cup of appropriate size and apply it to Taichong point. Retain the cup for 10-15 minutes.

5. Ganshu and Weishu Points

Location: Ganshu point is 1.5 cun away from the ninth thoracic spinal process on the inner side of the scapula; Weishu point is about 1.5 cun below the spinous process of the twelfth thoracic vertebra.

Method: Use the moving cupping method. Move the cup on the bladder meridian on the back by segment along the meridian, and move the cup several times mainly on Ganshu and Weishu points. Repeatedly push and pull on the points back and forth, until the skin becomes red. The cup may be retained on the abovementioned points for 10-15 minutes after the moving cupping.

MECHANISMS SIMILAR TO BOTH THERAPIES ⁽⁸⁾

Puncturing skin surface at the affected area



Excretion of interstitial fluids with wastes

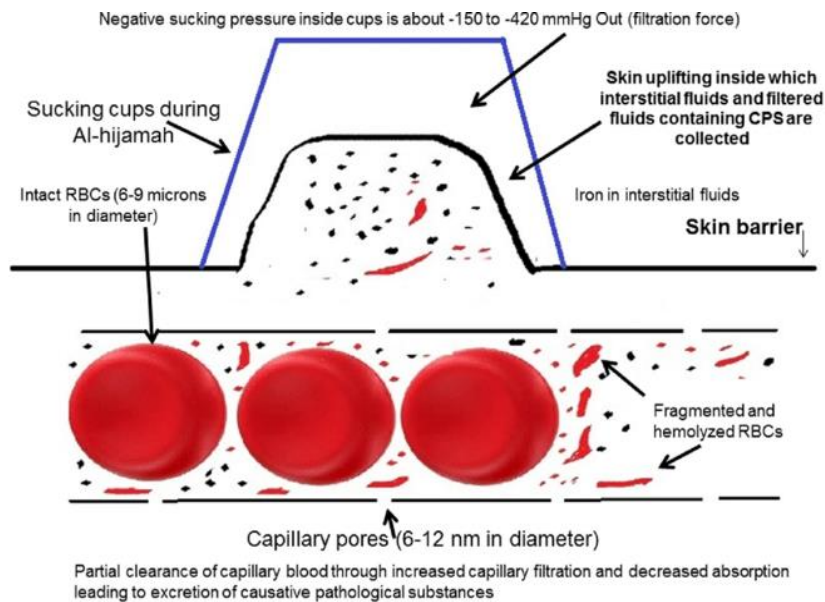
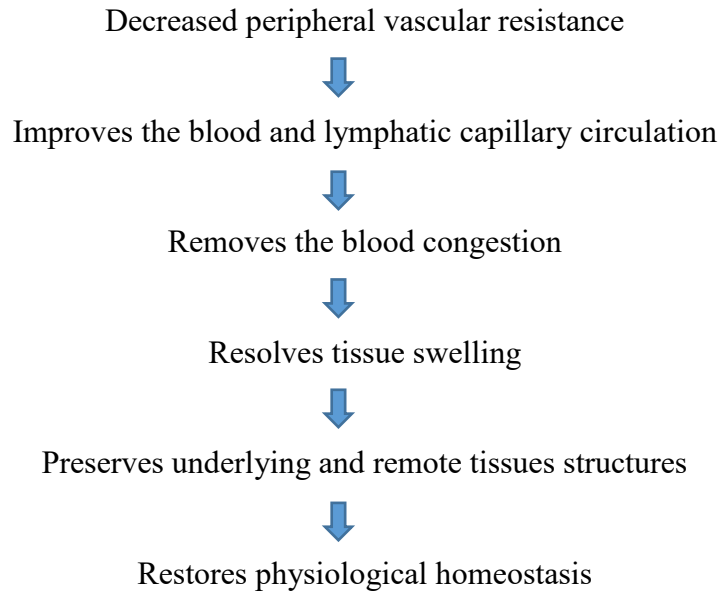


Drainage of excess fluids



Clearance of fluid and interstitial spaces





INDICATIONS AND CONTRAINDICATIONS BOTH THERAPIES (2,5)

BLOOD LETTING	CUPPING THERAPY
DURATION	
5-10 minutes- for 8 days	5-15 minutes – for 7-10 days
INDICATIONS	
	Anti – aging

Psychiatric disorders	Insomnia
Migraine	Amnesia
Ear diseases	Deafness and Tinnitus
Rheumatoid arthritis	Rheumatoid arthritis
Hypertension	Hypertension
Rashes	Rashes and irritation
Eye diseases	Stye
Tongue diseases	Tonsillitis
Pedal oedema	Anaemia
Cervical lymphadenopathy	Hyperlipidaemia
Gouty arthritis	Cervical spondylosis
LBA	Varicosity
Abscess	Cough
	Chronic pharyngitis
	Alopecia areata
	Eczema
	Urticaria
	Impotence
	Infertility
CONTRAINDICATIONS	
Epilepsy	Epilepsy
Pyrexia	Mental disorders
Cough	Haemorrhagic diseases
Quadriplegia	Severe allergic skin/ulceration
Tuberculosis	Malignant tumour
Anaemia	Pregnancy
Jaundice	Severe heart failure
Impotence	Renal failure
Alcoholics	Ascites due to cirrhosis of liver
Children's and Geriatrics	

BENEFITS ⁽⁹⁾

- ✓ Eliminate/ divert morbid material
- ✓ Enhance the blood supply
- ✓ Regulates the temperament of the particular organ
- ✓ Achieves Antispasmodic and detoxifying effect
- ✓ Nourish and stimulates viscera, organs and tissues
- ✓ Improve health and warding off illness

DISCUSSION

External therapies are the great boon of the Siddha medicine and Kuruthivaangal (Blood Letting) is one of the subtypes of external medicine in Siddha, which is practised very rarely by the doctors, but nowadays a treatment called Cupping therapy (Hijama) in Unani medicine is becoming famous which is similar to Blood Letting. In Siddha ancient literatures like Agasthiyar nayanavidhi-500, Nagamunivar nayanavidhi-200, Siddhar Aruvai maruthuvam gives some information about Blood Letting where it is related to the cupping therapy and it was found to be similar with some differences in it. Duration of the procedure slightly varies with 2 days. Blood Letting done for 8 days and cupping therapy 7- 10 days and timing slightly varies with 5 minutes. The diseases like Anaemia, Impotence and Cough are contraindicated in Blood Letting when compared to Cupping therapy in which the therapy is done for the above-mentioned diseases. In Blood Letting, sharp instruments like knife is used, but in Cupping therapy glass, horn, bronze, bamboos are used.

In Kuruthivaangal (Blood Letting), Varma points are not focused but Cupping therapy is focused on acupoints, and then blood Letting is done. In Blood Letting after the procedure has been done, poochu or patru like ointments are used, but Cupping therapy doesn't have this procedure. Even though, both therapies have such limitations in it, but the aim of the procedure is to cure the disease by Blood Letting and many diseases like Hypertension, Rheumatoid arthritis, Eye and Ear diseases are the similar diseases found to be treated and cured in both therapies.

Hence Cupping therapies are now practised in Asia, eastern Europe, middle east and Latin America but Kuruthivaangal (blood Letting) is the same therapy practised only in India from ancient days in siddha. Kuruthivaangal (Blood Letting) similar to the Cupping therapy can also be practised by creating awareness among the peoples which causes no side effects where scientific evidences can be created by the widespread usage of this therapy.

CONCLUSION

By comparing both external therapies Kuruthivaangal (Blood Letting) resembles the mechanism, benefits and indications of Cupping therapy. Hence, we conclude that the Siddha external therapy Kuruthivaangal (Blood Letting) which is ancient is similar to Cupping therapy.

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