



International Journal of Homoeopathic Sciences

E-ISSN: 2616-4493
P-ISSN: 2616-4485
Impact Factor (RJIF): 5.96
www.homoeopathicjournal.com
IJHS 2025; 9(3): 1624-1625
Received: 25-06-2025
Accepted: 27-07-2025

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An academic research paper on the Application of psychology in the holistic management of cases under homoeopathy

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DOI: <https://www.doi.org/10.33545/26164485.2025.v9.i3.Y.1876>

Abstract

Homoeopathy, as a holistic system of medicine, recognises the importance of physical, emotional, and mental health. Integrating psychological principles into homoeopathic practice enhances case-taking, helps in the understanding of patient disposition, and improves remedy selection. This study aimed to explore the role of psychology in the holistic management of cases under homoeopathy. A qualitative exploratory approach was adopted, involving a systematic review of classical homoeopathic texts and modern psychological literature. Findings confirm that homoeopathic case-taking involves psychological assessment, comparable to current psychological methods such as observation, introspection, and personality inventories. The evaluation of behaviour through cognitive, affective, and conative aspects shows parallels with modern psychology. Understanding personality theories, including Jung's theory and classical temperaments, supports individualised treatment planning. Existing literature supports the integration of psychology in homoeopathic practice, reinforcing the importance of integrating psychological assessment in case taking and the impact of knowledge of psychology in the treatment plan. Further research is needed to establish standardised guidelines and empirical validation of psychological approaches in homoeopathic therapeutics.

Keywords: Homoeopathy, psychology, holistic management, personality, behaviour assessment

Introduction

Homoeopathy is a holistic system of medicine that emphasises the individualised treatment of patients based on their physical, emotional, and mental characteristics. Psychological factors play a crucial role in the development, progression, and management of diseases. Emotional distress and mental predispositions can significantly influence the development of illnesses, which shape the symptomatology and overall health of an individual.

In clinical practice, a homoeopathic physician not only considers the physical symptoms but also assesses the patient's psychological state to select the most appropriate remedy. Integrating psychology into homoeopathic case-taking helps in the understanding of a patient's disposition, enabling more precise prescribing and better therapeutic outcomes.

Despite its importance, the application of psychological principles in homoeopathy faces challenges because of the subjective nature of psychological evaluations and the lack of standardised assessment tools. Addressing these limitations and suggesting effective ways for integrating psychological principles into homoeopathic practice can improve patient outcomes.

This study aims to explore the significance of psychological assessments in homoeopathic case-taking and the impact of a homoeopath's understanding of psychology on treatment planning.

Materials and Methods

This study adopts a qualitative research approach. The methodology includes a systematic review of literature, including homoeopathic texts and research articles from journals on homoeopathy & psychology. This study follows an exploratory research design on the integration of psychological assessments in homoeopathic case-taking and the impact of psychology in treatment planning.

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Results

The results confirmed that psychological assessments can be integrated into homoeopathic case taking and that knowledge of psychology will positively modify the treatment plan.

Discussion

Integration of psychological assessments in homoeopathic case-taking

The homoeopathic case-taking itself is a way of assessing a patient's personality. The holistic nature of homoeopathic case-taking requires a thorough understanding of the patient's emotional and psychological state. Hahnemann (1810), in the *Organon of Medicine* (§ 83-104), stressed the significance of psychological assessments in disease diagnosis and remedy selection.

According to him, the physician must be a good observer (§ 83,90). The art of observation is an important method in modern psychology for the assessment of behaviour and personality. He further states that the physician should allow the patient to detail the history freely without interruption (§84). This further highlights the importance of knowledge in the introspection method and the free association method in psychoanalysis by Sigmund Freud. During case taking, the physician should interrogate the patient regarding the obvious cause (§93). So, it again indicates the need for a proper understanding of psychoanalytic methods and projective methods of psychology. To assess the hypochondriac, hypersensitive and indolent patients (§96,97), the knowledge of various personality inventories like MMPI (Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Interview) helps the homoeopaths.

Totality of symptoms is the outwardly reflected picture of the internal essence of the disease, that is, of the affection of the vital force (§9). This concept of totality of symptoms by Hahnemann and the "sick" concept by Kent emphasises the importance of applying Gestalt psychology.

Behaviour includes all the cognitive, conative and affective aspects of a person.

1. Cognitive - related to thinking, reasoning, and knowledge.
2. Affective - related to emotions and feelings.
3. Conative - related to volition, willpower, desires, and purposeful action.

According to Kent, during the evaluation of mental symptoms, first we have to give importance to will & emotions, i.e. conative & affective aspects of behaviour. Then intellect & understanding & finally memory, these are cognitive aspects.

Assessment of behaviour in psychology includes naturalistic observations, introspection, experimental methods, psychophysical methods, etc. So knowledge of these methods will be helpful for a homoeopathic physician to assess the behaviour of the patients.

Knowledge of intelligence tests, assessment methods in memory, learning, etc. will also contribute towards a better case taking in homoeopathy.

The role of a homoeopath's psychological understanding in treatment planning

A homoeopath's ability to understand psychological principles is crucial in formulating individualised treatment plans. For example, Jung's theory of personality types can be applied to remedy selection, with correlations between

introverted and melancholic patients responding well to *Natrum muriaticum*, while extroverted and expressive individuals may benefit from *Phosphorus* or *Lachesis*.

Hippocratic classification of personality types is sanguine, choleric, phlegmatic and melancholic, corresponding to the dominance of body fluids such as blood, yellow bile, phlegm and black bile. Dr. HA Roberts also classifies persons into four classical temperaments. So proper understanding of personality types will help the physician in arriving at similitum. For example, *Pulsatilla* is suited to a phlegmatic temperament, and *Nux vomica* is suited to a choleric temperament.

The importance of empathy, patient communication, and psychological support in homoeopathic practice is supported by research in patient-centred care (Mead & Bower, 2000) [6]. Clinical studies suggest that integrating counselling techniques and psychological interventions alongside homoeopathic treatment improves patient compliance and long-term health outcomes (Swayne, 2012) [7].

Conclusion

Existing literature supports the integration of psychology in homoeopathic practice, reinforcing the importance of integrating psychological assessment in case taking and the impact of knowledge of psychology in the treatment plan. While challenges remain, advancements in psychological assessment methods can significantly enhance holistic case management. Further research is needed to establish standardised guidelines and empirical validation of psychological approaches in homoeopathic therapeutics.

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How to Cite This Article

Thwahir T. An academic research paper on the Application of psychology in the holistic management of cases under homoeopathy. *International Journal of Homoeopathic Sciences*. 2025;9(3):1624-1625.

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