

# **Attitude of Doctors of Bir Hospital Towards The Harmonization of Ayurveda and Modern Medicine**



**FINAL REPORT**

**Submitted To:  
Nepal Health Research Council  
(NHRC)  
Ramshahpath, kathmandu**

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2025

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**Contents:**

**Page No.**

1. Acknowledgement	1
2. List of Abbreviation	2
3. Abstract	3
4. Introduction	4
5. Objectives	5
6. Literature Review	5
7. Research Methodology	6
8. Findings	7
9. Discussions	12
10. Reference	14
11. Annex	15

## Acknowledgement:

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I would like to express my sincere gratitude towards **Dr. Rishi Ram Koirala**, executive member of NHRC, and president of Ayurveda Doctors Association of Nepal, for his valuable guidance and suggestions.

I would also like to thank **Dr Naresh Bhandari** for his support in various ways. I am also grateful to Mr. **Suman Dahal**, a **BAMS** student & **Raju Raut**, without whom this work could not have been possible. Finally, I would like to thank all those who have helped me in preparing this report.

## Abbreviations



<b>BAMS</b>	-	Bachelor in Ayurvedic Medicine and Surgery
<b>Dr.</b>	-	Doctor
<b>IOM</b>	-	Institute of Medicine
<b>NHRC</b>	-	Nepal Health Research Council
<b>PI</b>	-	Principal Investigator
<b>TU</b>	-	Tribhuvan University
<b>WHO</b>	-	World Health Organization

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## **Abstract:**

The study on attitude of Doctors' towards harmonization of Ayurveda and Modern Medicine was conducted from 7<sup>th</sup> November 2004 to 27 May 2005 in different departments of Bir Hospital (Ortho, Cardio, Neuro, Liver, GIT, Dermatology, ENT, Eye etc.). A total of 102 questionnaires were distributed to doctors out of which 84 questionnaires were responded completely. Around 85 % of the statements were positively responded. Factors like age, sex, address, work experience, higher academic background didn't show any significant difference in the attitude.

**Keywords:** Doctors' attitude, Harmonization, Ayurveda and Modern medicine

## **Introduction:**

The development of the medicine as a social science occurred over many centuries. Every culture has influenced this development. Modern medicine has its foundation in Greek culture. Hippocrates and Galen were the scientist and physician as well as philosophers of modern medicine. They considered philosophy and medicine two sides of same coin. Only in the last few centuries, with the emergence of natural sciences (Physics, Chemistry, Biology), has medicine been separated from philosophy. Modern medicine has become primarily a somatological science, resting on an experimental basis. The result has been the development of enormously successful treatment of acute infection and for illnesses that can be treated surgically. On the other hand in spite of these improvements in modern medicine, the treatment of chronic and psychosomatic illnesses remains unsatisfactory. In such illnesses modern medicine is only marginally successful.

Ayurveda the science of life developed over centuries as a holistic medical system has provided treatment for chronic illnesses .The use of Ayurvedic treatment method, therefore, is effective in cases where modern medicine continues to be unsuccessful or does not achieve the desired result. In many cases, Ayurveda medication and therapies can be combined with ongoing treatment of allopathic medication or can be used even if other treatment methods have been tried in the past.

Since Ayurvedic preparations do not create any negative side effect, the ever-increasing number of chronic illnesses and the explosion of health care costs should be the reason enough to harmonize modern and Ayurveda medicine. And now a day's public is also asking for new, more natural treatment methods that do not create any side effect. But in present context of Nepal, some allopathic doctors are strongly opposing the traditional medicine even though the patient gets relief by using Ayurvedic medicine whereas some doctors are in favor of Ayurvedic medicine and are prescribing those medicines in their daily practice.

Till date, there has been no such type of study on the attitude of doctors towards harmonization of Ayurveda and modern medicine. So we tried to find out the real scenario in our context. This present study was designed to use a special questionnaire for full assessment of attitude of doctors in different wards of for hospital towards harmonization of Ayurveda and modern medicine.

## **Objectives:**

### **General:**

- To assess the attitude of Bir Hospital Doctors towards the harmonization of Ayurveda and Modern Medicine

### **Specific:**

- To assess the attitude of allopathic doctors towards ayurveda medicine
- To assess the policy to harmonize ayurveda and modern medicine
- To assess the conflicts between ayurveda and modern medicine

## **Literature Review:**

Quite similar type of study has been done in various countries for the treatment of various specific chronic diseases and the results are satisfactory. The article about the harmonization of traditional and modern medicine by Jhu-Fan Xie in "Traditional medicine of Asia", published by WHO, also shows the good result in health care system of China after harmonizing traditional and modern medicine. The statements were found in favor of traditional medicine and more favorable attitude towards harmonization of traditional and modern medicine. In China, Japan, the Republic of Korea and Vietnam, the use of herbal and traditional medicine is the part of the formal health service system.

## Methodology:

This was a cross sectional descriptive type of study which was carried out for 3 and 1/2 months in different wards of Bir Hospital. Over all 102 questionnaires written in English script were distributed to Doctors of all Departments. The doctors were asked to complete the questionnaire anonymously. Further more, they are also assured that their responses will not be exposed to others and would not affect their duty in any way. The questionnaires were completed in the ward or in the OPD (where doctors were available) and recollected on the same day or on the days called by the doctors. Then, coding of collected data was done with the number and coded data were entered in a computer in Microsoft excel and coded data were analyzed.

The questionnaires were a kind of a checklist with a dichotomous rating scale (Yes or No), and multiple-choice questions which were relatively simple to construct, easy for the respondent, and fairly reliable. The questionnaires consisted of both positive and negative statements. Actually, each statement was asked negatively in another way without changing the main concept or meaning so that biasness could be reduced, presuming that there could be different responses to two different statements carrying same concept and could be the real attitude. Therefore, to know the real attitude, respondents were also asked to explain the statement, why he / she responded positively and negatively.

For example:

- 1) The medicine used in Ayurveda is safer and more natural than of chemical allopathic medicine.
- 2) Most of the allopathic medicine have undesirable side effect.

Both statements above were asked to find out the real attitude towards the Ayurveda and modern medicine, the first statement was positively asked while the second was asked negatively to know the real concept on same thing.

The total responds to the different statements as true or false were calculated on percentage and the reason or the opinion given by the respondents were also analyzed in descriptive way.

The questionnaires also contained the respondents' age, sex, address, academic qualification, working experience, and were included for further analyzing and within group comparison study age-wise, sex-wise- (male, female), working experience wise (>10yrs <10yrs), academic status wise (only graduation and > graduation).



## **Findings (result)**

A total of 102 doctors were given the questionnaire and 84 (82.35%) returned the completed questionnaires with their perspectives. Their mean age was 40.95 years and their mean work experience in year was 9.931. According to the guideline provided by the professor, during data analyzing, the response rate of more than fifty percentage was regarded as favorable and less than fifty was as unfavorable to our study.

All the doctors (100%) who responded accepted Ayurveda as a traditional medical system of Nepal.

Among the total of 84 Doctors, 54.76% believed that Ayurveda medicine system was based on scientific logic while 38.1% responded negatively and 7.14% didn't give any comment.

The percentage of the patients endorsing each of the questionnaire items is shown in the table below.

<b>S.N.</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>	<b>N.R.</b>
1	Ayurveda is the traditional medical system of Nepal.	100 %		.
2	Ayurveda medicine system is based on scientific logic.	54.76 %	38.1 %	7.14 %
3	The medicines used in Ayurveda are more safe and natural than that of chemical allopathic medicines.	60.7 %	29.76 %	9.52 %
4	Have you ever referred patients for Ayurvedic treatment?	33.33 %	66.66 %	
5	Do you think that for an Ayurvedic doctor it is necessary to use modern technologies to diagnose a disease?	98.81 %	-	1.19 %
6	Do you think modern doctors need an exposure to Ayurvedic medicine?	94.04 %	5.59 %	-
7	Do you think it is essential for Ayurvedic doctors to learn modern allopathic medicines?	88.1 %	11.9 %	-
8	Do you agree that Ayurvedic medical system is also not successful to cure all diseases?	100 %	-	-
9	Most of the allopathic medicines have undesirable side effect.	45.24 %	51.2 %	3.57 %
10	Combined treatment of modern allopathic and Ayurvedic medicine is essential to get superior results in those cases where only modern or Ayurvedic medicines are not successful.	84.52 %	10.71 %	4.76 %
11	Ayurvedic medicines are gaining popularity day by day globally.	79.76 %	20.23 %	-

12	There is need of incorporation of Ayurveda medicines in modern allopathic hospitals.	34.52 %	65.47 %	-
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S.N.	Statement	A %	B %	C %	D %	E %	N %
13	What is your opinion towards Ayurvedic Medicines?	20.24	4.16	57.14	11.37	-	7.07
14	How you feel about Ayurveda health system in present context of Nepal?	10.71	79.76	4.76	-	-	-
15	How you feel about the policy of government towards Ayurveda health system?	2.38	42.85	50	-	-	4.76
16	Ayurveda medicines are mostly effective in	1.8	53.57	9.52	27.38	2.38	5.71

S.N.	Statement	a	b	c	N.R.
17	How is it possible to get Ayurveda knowledge to modern doctors?	29.76	67.85	-	2.38

S.N.	Statement	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	N.R.
18	Harmonization of Ayurveda and modern is possible by	3.37	10.31	5.15	3	55.54	20.24	0	3.8

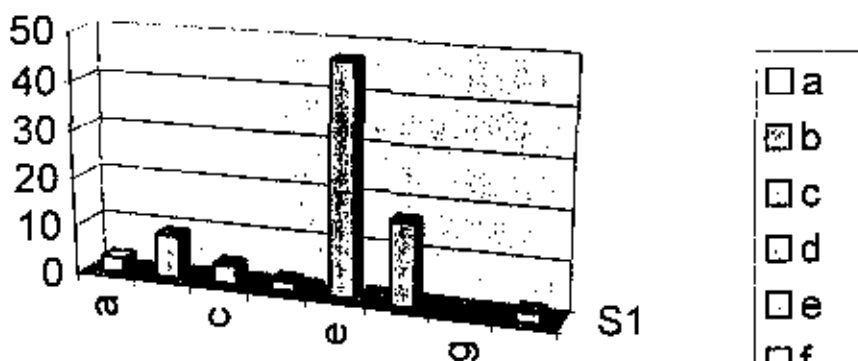
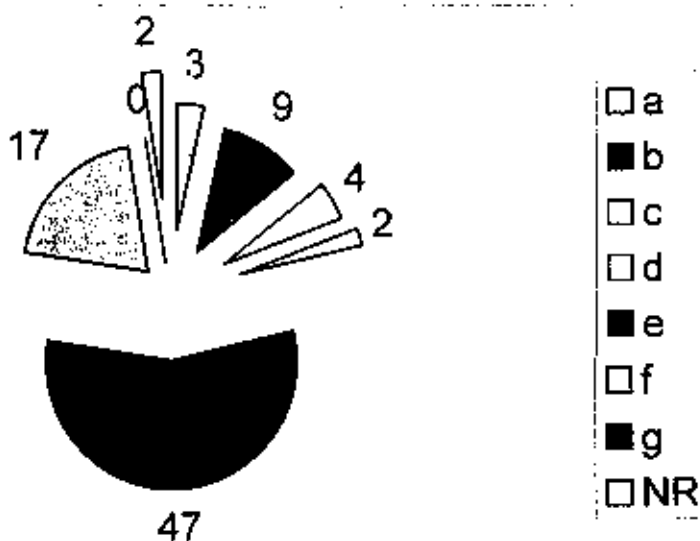
S.N.	Statement	Yes	No
19	Have you ever prescribed Ayurveda medicine?	64.28	35.71

## Distributed Questionnaires



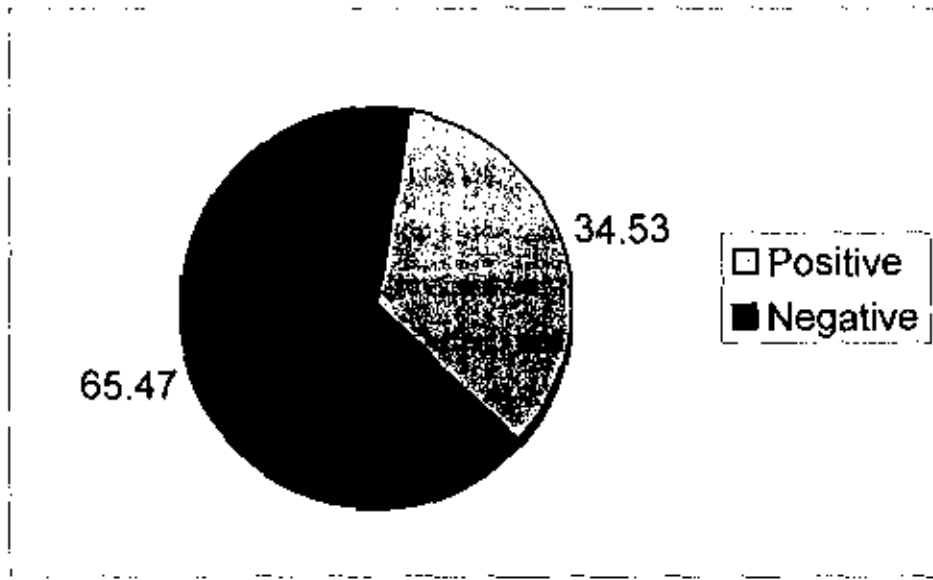
- Distributed Questionnaires Responding
- Distributed Questionnaires Non-Responding

## Possibilities of Harmonization:

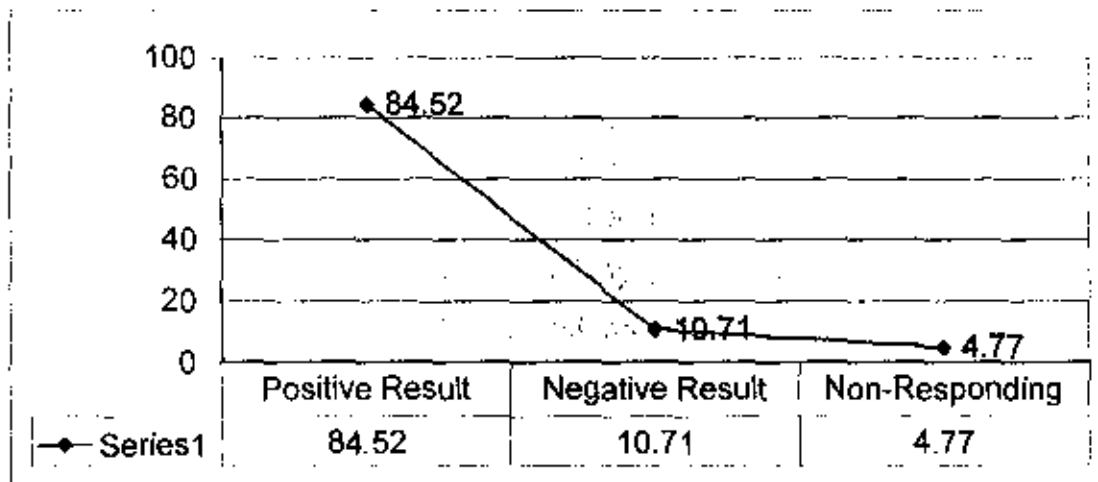


	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	NR
Series1	3	9	4	2	47	17	0	2

## Incorporation Of Ayurveda in Modern Hospitals:



## Combined Treatment:



98.81 % doctors opine that for an Ayurvedic doctors it is necessary to use modern technologies to diagnose a disease while 1.19 % didn't responded to the statement. Again, 94.04 % doctors accepted that modern doctors also need exposure to Ayurvedic medicine but 5.95 % doctors responded negatively. 88.1 % of the doctors said that it is essential for Ayurveda doctors to learn modern allopathic medicine and 11.9 % said that it is not essential.

The study shows that 64.28 % of doctors had prescribed Ayurveda medicine during their practice while 35.71 % hadn't. In case of doctors who had prescribed Ayurveda medicine, 88.88 % of them prescribed it

with allopathic medicine where as 3.7 % prescribed only Ayurveda medicine. Among them 83.33 % cases were improved, 5.55 % cases remained as they were and 5.55 % cases were very effective. Among the doctors who didn't prescribed Ayurveda medicine, 38.33 % had no idea about Ayurveda medicine where as 11.66 % doctors thought that Ayurveda medicine didn't have clear Pharmacokinetic and Pharmacodynamic mechanism.

All the respondent doctors (100%) agreed with the statement that, Ayurveda medicine system is also not successful to cure all types of diseases, 60.7 % of the doctors thought that Ayurveda medicine is safer and more natural than that of allopathic medicine and 29.76 % doctors gave negative comment to the statement, while 9.52 % didn't respond to the statement. 45.24 % of the doctors accepted that allopathic medicines have undesirable side effects and 51.12 % responded negatively to the statement, while 3.57 % didn't respond. 67.85 % of the respondent doctors thought that it is possible to get Ayurveda knowledge by organizing short term training program while 29.76 % said that it is only possible by reforming the educational system of medicines.

There was a significant finding that 84.52 % agreed that combined treatment of modern allopathic and Ayurvedic medicine is essential to get superior results in those cases where only allopathic or Ayurvedic medicines are not successful. 79.76 % of doctors agreed that, in the context of Nepal, Ayurveda health system have good support of Nepali people while 16.71 % of doctors agreed for its well establishment among Nepali people and 4.76 % gave negative comment i.e. not accepted by Nepali people. About the question gaining popularity by Ayurvedic medicine day by day globally, a significant number i.e. 79.76 % agreed with the statement and the rest, 20.23 % didn't.

Among the 7 adjectives to choose, 55.54 % of doctors agreed that Ayurveda and modern medicine can be harmonized by discovering advantages of Ayurveda medicines through modern scientific research methodology; 10.31 % doctors agreed for reforming educational system of Nepal; 3.37 % doctors agreed for incorporating Ayurveda and modern medicine in same hospital; 5.15 % doctors agreed for establishing Ayurveda and modern hospital separately, 20.24 % doctors agreed for all the choice mentioned above.

Towards the policy of government for Ayurveda Health system, 50 % of doctors agreed that government gave less priority to Ayurveda in comparison to allopathic medicine system, while 42.85 % said that it is neglected by the government & 2.38 % gave comment for its well support from the government. 34.52 % of doctors agreed that; there is need of incorporation of Ayurveda medicine in modern hospital while 65.47 % of the doctors didn't agree with the statement.

## Discussion:

The result of the survey showed that the attitude of the Bir hospital doctors towards harmonization of Ayurveda and modern medicine on the whole, was highly favorable. There was consistently positive attitude toward the Ayurveda Medicine, its harmonization with Modern Medicine and whole Ayurveda Medical system of Nepal. For these statements, there was no significant difference with the findings of the statements, which were negatively asked. Further more other statements about the safety and efficacy of the Ayurvedic medicine, referring the patient for the Ayurveda treatment, need exposure to Ayurveda medicine for allopathic doctors, need of combined treatment of Ayurveda and Allopathic medicine for those cases where Ayurveda and Allopathic medicine are not successful, popularity gained by the Ayurveda medicine, have also highly positive responses. However there was significant difference with the findings of their negatively asked questions, though these negative statements were also responded in positive manner. And these significant differences in finding positive respond of negative statements could be due to the reason. i) The response could be for the statements, which are put forward in different manner but with the same concept. ii) The doctors didn't understand the theme of statement i.e. about Ayurveda and responded without knowing correctly. iii) There are few missing values in the total percentage of the response that could be due to either dilemma for choosing true or false or could be that the doctors didn't like the statements and didn't respond.

The over all view of the Bir hospital doctors toward Ayurveda was positive. The opinions given by the doctors can be categorized as follows:

- 1) Ayurveda medicines should be evidence based or scientifically proved,
- 2) Ayurveda medicines should have clear Pharmaco-kinetic and Pharmaco-dynamic action
- 3) Government should give more priority to Ayurveda health system.

The limitations of study are i) the small size of sample on which it is based. Among the total of 84 returned sample, responded rate was 82.35%. Among 102 distributed questionnaires, 84 were returned, 18 were not responded because of doctors business and unavailability of the doctors in the hospital. Therefore remaining 84 cases were only considered for analysis. ii) The limitations of small size sample are perhaps partly off set by the high degree of consistency in the response. iii) The low response rate could have resulted in a bias if the attitude of non-respondent were systematically different from these completing the questionnaire. Nevertheless first response rate of more than 60 % is generally regarded as very good in survey research. Further more a sample size of more than 30 is considered as large enough for statistical purpose.

Finally to the conclusion, attitudes are not learnt from the textbooks, they are acquired by the social interactions and it is truly said that, “attitudes are caught and not taught”. On balance we think we have shown that most doctors in our study had caught highly favorable attitude towards the harmonization of Ayurveda medicine with modern medicine.

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## Annex: Questionnaire

Namaskar,

We BAMS students doing internship at Ayurveda Hospital are conducting a research on the Doctors' attitude toward harmonization of Ayurveda and modern medicine. And this questionnaire has been developed to seek your personal view toward the topic. There will be no any type of personal benefit to you and your participant is entirely volunteer. We also want to assure you that this will be kept anonymous and will not harm you in any way.

1) Ayurveda is the traditional medical system of Nepal.

Yes

No

2) Ayurveda medicine system is based on scientific logic.

Yes

No

3) The medicines used in Ayurveda are more safe and natural than that of chemical allopathic medicines.

Yes

No

4) Ayurvedic medicines are mostly effective in:

a. Acute illnesses

b. chronic illnesses

c. Psychosomatic diseases

d. any type of illnesses

e. Not effective at all

5) Have you ever prescribed Ayurvedic medicines?

Yes

No

If yes,

In what way have you prescribed Ayurvedic medicines?

a. Along with allopathic medicines

b. Ayurvedic medicine alone

What is the result?

a. Improved

b. Deteriorated

c. As it is

d. very effective

If not,

Then reason behind that is?

a. Ayurvedic medicines are less effective

b. Ayurvedic medicines are not effective

c. Ayurvedic medicines are toxic in nature

d. No idea about Ayurvedic medicines

e. Ayurvedic medicines have no clear pharmaco-kinetic & -dynamic mechanism

6) Have you ever referred patients for Ayurvedic treatment?

Yes

No

7) What is your opinion towards Ayurvedic medicines?

- a. They are used as general tonic      b. They are used as placebo medicines.  
c. They are used as real medicines      d. They are used just to satisfy the patients.

8) Do you think that for an Ayurvedic doctor it is necessary to use modern technologies to diagnose a disease?

Yes

No

9) Do you think modern doctors need an exposure to Ayurvedic medicine?

Yes

No

10) Do you think it is essential for Ayurvedic doctors to learn modern allopathic medicines?

Yes

No

11) Do you agree that ayurvedic medical system is also not successful to cure all diseases?

Yes

No

12) How is it possible to get Ayurvedic knowledge to modern doctors?

- a. By reforming the educational system of medicines  
b. By organizing short term training program  
c. Other if any

13) Most of the allopathic medicine have undesirable side effect?

Yes

No

14) Combined treatment of modern allopathic & Ayurvedic medicine is essential to get superior results in those cases where only modern or Ayurvedic medicines are not successful

Yes

No

15) How you feel about Ayurveda health system in present context of Nepal?

- a. Well established among Nepali people  
b. Have good support of Nepali people  
c. Not accepted by Nepali People  
d. Other if any

16) Ayurvedic medicines are gaining popularity day by day globally.

Yes

No

17) How you feel about the policy of government towards Ayurveda health system?

- a. Well supported by the government  
b. Neglected by the government  
c. Give less priority to Ayurveda in comparison to allopathic medical system  
d. Others if any

18) There is need of incorporation of Ayurveda medicines in modern allopathic hospital

Yes

No

Explain.....

- 19) Harmonization of Ayurveda & modern medicine is possible by
- Incorporating Ayurveda & modern medicine in same hospital
  - Reforming educational system of medicine.
  - Establishing Ayurveda & modern hospital separately
  - Establishing legal constitutional in formal health system
  - Discovering advantages of Ayurvedic medicines through modern scientific research methodology.
  - All of the above
  - Not possible to harmonize Ayurvedic & modern medicines.

20) What is your overall view towards Ayurveda Health system in Nepal?

Respondents:-

Age:-

Sex:-

Work experience (in years) :-

Address:-

Academic Qualification:- M.B.B.S, M.D./M.S. ,More than P.G.....