



"DEMOGRAPHIC DETERMINANTS OF SATISFACTION WITH SIDDHA MEDICINE IN DHARMAPURI DISTRICT: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY USING CHI-SQUARE TEST"

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Abstract

Siddha medicine plays a significant role in people's lives, treating various health issues. This study examines the level of satisfaction among customers with Siddha medicine in Dharmapuri District. The study was conducted using an interview schedule involving 73 participants from the district. The sampling method used was convenience sampling. To analyze the data, percentage analysis, Chi-square test and t-test were used. The findings indicate that the majority of respondents are well-informed about Siddha medicines and actively use them. They feel comfortable and satisfied with it.

Keywords: *Customer Satisfaction, Healthy, Siddha Medicine, Traditional Medicine, Natural.*

Introduction to Siddha Medicine

Siddha medicine is one of the oldest known medical systems, believed to have originated over 25,000 years ago. It was developed by enlightened sages known as Siddhars, whose deep knowledge and spiritual insight laid the foundation for this healing tradition. The name "Siddha" itself is derived from these revered figures. The medicines were crafted through extensive research conducted by the Siddhars using herbs, minerals, and animal products.

The founding figure of Siddha medicine is the ancient sage Agasthiar, regarded as the primordial Guru. Alongside him, 18 prominent Siddhars contributed significantly to the growth and refinement of this system through their wisdom and experiential knowledge. A unique aspect of Siddha medicine is its holistic approach—it does not separate treatment from prevention. Its core philosophy emphasizes disease prevention, echoing the timeless principle: "Prevention is better than cure." This tradition was passed down through generations via the **Gurukula** system, where disciples learned directly from their masters. Rooted in the early Dravidian civilization, Siddha medicine evolved entirely in the Tamil language and remains a vital part of Tamil heritage.

Evolution and Significance of Siddha Medicine

Following India's independence, the Government of Tamil Nadu formally recognized and developed Siddha as a structured medical system. Today, therapies such as physiotherapy, panchakarma, marmam, acupressure, naturopathy, and yoga are often seen as distinct disciplines. However, all of these practices trace their roots back to the Siddha tradition, where they originally coexisted as part of a unified healing approach.

Siddha medicine stands out for its holistic philosophy—it nurtures not just the physical body, but also promotes mental peace and spiritual purity. This integrative focus makes it truly unique among global medical systems.



The origins of Siddha lie with the Siddhars, enlightened beings who mastered control over their bodies and minds. Their profound contributions laid the foundation for Tamil medicine as we know it today. Siddha medicine has successfully treated many complex and chronic illnesses, including autoimmune disorders, neurological conditions, collagen diseases, and rheumatoid arthritis. Among ancient healing systems like Ayurveda and Unani, Siddha is distinguished by its extensive use of metals and minerals in therapeutic formulations. It was first developed in Tamil Nadu and remains deeply rooted in Tamil culture.

Objectives of the Study

Siddha medicine, one of the most ancient healing systems in India, is gaining global recognition for its therapeutic value and holistic approach. This study focuses on evaluating **customer satisfaction with Siddha medicine** in Dharmapuri District, exploring how traditional remedies are perceived and utilized in contemporary healthcare.

1. To assess the overall level of customer satisfaction with Siddha medicine among users in the selected region.
2. To examine the demographic profile of Siddha medicine users, including variables such as age, gender, education, occupation, and income.
3. To analyze the association between demographic factors and satisfaction levels using the Chi-square test of independence.
4. To identify which demographic variables, if any, significantly influence satisfaction with Siddha medicine.
5. To provide insights into consumer behavior and preferences regarding traditional medicine systems, specifically Siddha.

Research Methodology

The study employs a descriptive research design, offering a systematic framework for data collection and analysis. A convenience sampling technique was used to select a sample of 73 respondents from Dharmapuri District between during the period from **March and May 2025**.

Review of Literature

Several studies have examined consumer satisfaction and awareness regarding traditional medicine systems in India. Dr. K. S. Kavitha & T. Anish Fathima (2017) found that demographic factors like age, gender, and education significantly influence satisfaction with herbal products in Erode district. Ms. K. Sujatha et al. (2018) highlighted a growing preference for Ayurvedic skincare products, especially Himalaya, and stressed the importance of strategic marketing. P. Sivaranjani et al. (2019) reported high awareness and usage of Ayurvedic brands in Coimbatore, though the findings may not reflect broader national trends.

In the context of Siddha medicine, E. Velmurugan & Dr. P. Amarjothi (2019) identified demographic influences on satisfaction in Madurai, while Dr. C. Madhesh & M. Chitra (2020) confirmed widespread use and comfort with Siddha treatments in Salem. K. Venkataraman (2021) emphasized Siddha's role in managing viral diseases and its relevance during health crises. M. Suryakumar & S. V. Rajkamal (2023) explored public trust in Ayurvedic medicine during COVID-19, revealing strong preference and satisfaction across Tamil Nadu.

These studies collectively underscore the growing acceptance of traditional medicine and the importance of demographic factors in shaping consumer attitudes and satisfaction.



The Elemental and Humoral Framework of Siddha Healing

Siddha medicine, one of India's oldest healing systems, is rooted in the philosophy that the human body is a microcosm of the universe, composed of five elemental forces—earth, water, fire, air, and sky. It emphasizes holistic wellness through the balance of three humors: Vaadham (air), Pittham (fire), and Kapam (water). Disease is believed to result from an imbalance in these humors, influenced by factors such as diet, lifestyle, and emotional stress. Diagnosis in Siddha involves evaluating pulse, urine, voice, and body characteristics, with treatment tailored to the individual's constitution. Siddha remedies often include processed metals and minerals, and have shown effectiveness in managing chronic conditions like skin disorders, STDs, and gastrointestinal issues. The system also integrates spiritual practices, aiming for both physical health and inner harmony. Institutions like the National Institute of Siddha (NIS) in Chennai and the Central Council for Research in Siddha play a vital role in education, research, and public outreach. With government support and academic programs like BSMS, Siddha continues to thrive in modern healthcare, upheld by traditional practitioners known as Vaithiyars.

The 18 Tamil Siddhars – A Brief Overview

According to Tamil tradition, 18 Siddhars are revered as the foundational figures of Siddha medicine, known for their mastery in alchemy, yoga, medicine, and spiritual wisdom.

1. **Agathiyar**: Father of Siddha medicine and Tamil grammar; authored over 342 texts including Agathiyam.
2. **Thirumoolar**: Mystic and author of Thirumanthiram; emphasized body-soul harmony and Kalpa Yoga.
3. **Bogar**: Alchemist who created the Nava Pasana idol at Palani; known for mercurial and arsenical formulations.
4. **Konganar**: Expert in elixirs and spiritual philosophy; authored over 40 texts.
5. **Therayar**: Polymath and astrologer; known for disease classification and linguistic scholarship.
6. **Korakkar**: Innovator in herbal medicine; associated with Indian hemp-based formulations.
7. **Karuvurar**: Architect and spiritual mentor; contributed to Tanjore Temple construction.
8. **Edaikkadar**: Known for rejuvenation therapy and alchemy; believed to be an incarnation of Vishnu.
9. **Chattamuni**: Sri Lankan origin; contributed to yoga and Siddha philosophy.
10. **Sundaranar**: Specialist in Chunnam (calcined compounds); disciple of Chattamuni.
11. **Ramadevar**: Kayakalpa expert; born in Podhigai Hills.
12. **Pampatti Siddhar**: Master of mystical powers; known for Aadu Pambe.
13. **Machamuni**: Ancient Pandya scholar; authored Perunool 800.
14. **Kudambai Siddhar**: Focused on Gnana Yoga and spiritual enlightenment.
15. **Azhuganni Siddhar**: Disciple of Edaikkadar; known for Gnanakovai.
16. **Agapai Siddhar**: Disciple of Korakkar; centered on spiritual wisdom.
17. **Thiru Nandhi Devar**: Chief guardian of Kailash; guru of all Siddhars.
18. **Kakapusundar**: Disciple of Agathiyar; known for Mei Gnana Vilakkam.

These Siddhars laid the foundation for Siddha medicine, blending science, spirituality, and healing practices that continue to influence traditional medicine today.

Statistical Interpretation: Overall, the statistical approach provides both a broad overview and targeted insights into how demographic factors influence satisfaction, supporting the study's objective of identifying key determinants in consumer perception of Siddha medicine.



Additionally, inferential statistical tools like the Chi-square test were applied to examine associations between categorical variables (e.g., age, gender, education) and overall satisfaction with Siddha medicine.

Percentage Analysis: Percentage analysis is one of the basic statistical tools which is widely used in analysis and interpretation of primary data. It deals with the number of respondents response to a particular question is percentage arrived from the total population selected for the study.

Table – I: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

S. No	Demographic Variables	No. of the Respondents	Percentage	Total
1.	Gender			73
	Male	35	47.9%	
	Female	38	52.1%	
2.	Age group (in years)			73
	Less than 25 Years	12	16.4%	
	26-50 Years	28	38.4%	
	51-75 Years	25	34.2%	
	Above 75 Years	8	10.9%	
3.	Educational Qualification			73
	Illiterate	13	17.8%	
	HSC	15	20.5%	
	Under Graduate	20	27.4%	
	Post Graduate	19	26.0%	
	Others	6	8.2%	
4.	Occupations			73
	Agriculture	15	20.5%	
	Self Employed	23	31.5%	
	Government Employee	14	19.2%	
	Professional	16	21.9%	
	Others	5	6.8%	
5.	Family monthly income (Rs)			73
	Less than Rs. 10,000	13	17.8%	
	Rs. 10,001-20,000	22	30.1%	
	Rs. 20,001-30,000	28	38.3%	
	Above Rs. 30,001	10	13.6%	

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: The demographic analysis shows that the majority of respondents are female (52.1%), within the age group of 26–50 years (38.4%), hold undergraduate degrees (27.4%), are self-employed (31.5%), and have a monthly income between ₹20,001–30,000 (38.3%). These groups demonstrate notable awareness and usage of Siddha medicine.



Table – 2: Overall Satisfaction of Siddha Medicines

Overall Satisfaction	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	20	27.4%
Satisfied	31	42.5%
Neutral	16	21.9 %
Dissatisfied	5	6.8 %
Highly Dissatisfied	1	1.4 %
Total	73	100.0

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: A significant portion of respondents (42.5%) expressed satisfaction with Siddha medicine, while 27.4% reported being highly satisfied. Only a small percentage showed dissatisfaction (6.8%) or high dissatisfaction (1.4%).

Chi – square Test– Association between Demographics and Satisfaction

Hypotheses

1. **H₀:** No significant association exists between demographic factors and satisfaction with Siddha medicine.
2. **H₁:** A significant association exists between demographic factors and satisfaction with Siddha medicine.

Table – 3: Overall Satisfaction towards Siddha Medicines

Demographic Variables	Chi-square Value	P - Value	Ho Accepted / Rejected
Gender	5.678	0.375	Accepted
Age group (in years)	7.530	0.575	Accepted
Educational Qualification	12.001	0.357	Accepted
Occupations	16.825	0.324	Accepted
Family monthly income (Rs)	4.928	0.815	Accepted

Source: Primary Data

Limitations of the study

1. The research is geographically limited to Dharmapuri District.
2. The sample size is relatively small (73 respondents).
3. Responses may carry subjective bias.
4. Quantitative validation is challenging due to the qualitative nature of the data.

Suggestions to Improve Satisfaction with Siddha Medicine

1. Enhance Public Awareness and Education

- a. Conduct community outreach programs and health camps to educate people about the benefits, usage, and safety of Siddha medicine.
- b. Integrate Siddha principles into school and college health curricula to build early awareness.

2. Improve Accessibility and Availability

- a. Expand Siddha clinics and pharmacies in rural and urban areas.
- b. Ensure consistent availability of certified Siddha products through government and private channels.



3. **Standardize Quality and Safety**

- a. Strengthen quality control measures for Siddha formulations through regulatory oversight.
- b. Promote GMP (Good Manufacturing Practices) certification for Siddha product manufacturers.

4. **Modernize Packaging and Branding**

- a. Use attractive, informative, and user-friendly packaging to appeal to younger consumers.
- b. Highlight natural ingredients and benefits clearly on product labels.

5. **Train Practitioners and Staff**

- a. Provide regular training for Vaithiyars and healthcare workers in communication, diagnosis, and patient care.
- b. Encourage integration of Siddha with modern diagnostic tools for better patient confidence.

6. **Encourage Research and Innovation**

- a. Support clinical trials and scientific validation of Siddha treatments.
- b. Collaborate with universities and research centers to publish findings and improve credibility.

7. **Leverage Digital Platforms**

- a. Create mobile apps and websites for Siddha consultations, product orders, and health tips.
- b. Use social media to share success stories, testimonials, and expert advice.

Conclusion

The Siddhars played a foundational role in shaping Tamil medicine, contributing to fields such as alchemy, yoga, astrology, and public health. In today's health-conscious society, there is growing awareness and preference for natural remedies. With concerns over side effects in allopathic treatments, many individuals are turning to traditional systems like Siddha. This study highlights the factors influencing customer preference and satisfaction, revealing that Siddha medicine is widely appreciated for its safety, effectiveness, and holistic benefits. It continues to serve as a valuable tool for maintaining health and well-being in modern times.

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