

Introduction of Modern Healing System in Cooch Behar Sadder From 1878 to 1900

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Abstract – This paper examines the development of western medical system of princely state like Cooch Behar, a district of West Bengal of India. It analyses the indoor and outdoor patients of the Cooch Behar Sadder Dispensary by means actually how many people were availed the modern medical facility of Cooch Behar Sadder during the nineteenth century, a resource that has hitherto not been reached systematically and the ratio of indoor and outdoor patients according to census report of Cooch Behar Sadder. The study mainly shows the initial problems for the development of the modern healing system in Cooch Behar Sadder and tried to show actually how many peoples were interested about modern or western medical system.

Key Words: Ayurvedic, Unani, Health, Medicine, Indoor Patients, Outdoor patients, Indigenous Medicine, Western Medicine.

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INTRODUCTION

The indigenous medical systems were in practice before the western healing system by the European traders came to India in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In India medical service came into existence in 1600 AD when The East India Company began to appoint its own medical officers in England in its vessels bound for India. In the year 1749 the company appointed 30 doctors in different positions in the company.[1] The Bengal medical service was established on 20th October 1763 through the orders of Fort William.[2] Before the Western medicine the royal family and the common people of Cooch Behar state were great believer of traditional medical system like Ayurveda, Unani and Kaviraji. But after the introduction of modern healing system people gradually accepted it and the people of Cooch Behar Sadhar welcomed the modern healing system.

Cooch Behar is now a district of West Bengal of India. It was a native state and had a long past history. From 1896 the name Cooch Behar was devoted to the kingdom. The Koch kings dominated it for a long time known as 'Koch dynasty'. Afterwards from 1st January, 1950, Cooch Behar was merged into the province of West Bengal according to the Merger Act of 28th August 1949 and became a significant district of West Bengal.[3] The state of Cooch Behar lies between 25° 58' and 26° 33' north latitude, and between 88° 48' and 89° 55' east longitude. The state was completely sovereign country before the year 1773. After that by a treaty

between Maharaja Dharendranarayan and English East India Company was finalized on April 5, 1773 state somehow lost his absolute sovereignty. The state became a native state under company and thereafter under British Government.

Before the first half of the nineteenth century the system of allopathic medicine was unknown in the princely state Cooch Behar. The royal family and the common people were a great believer of traditional medical system. The Rajas of Koch Bihar had from early times Kavirajas or Ayurvedic physicians. But this form of treatment was confined to the royal family and to the upper classes. The common masses had large faith in ojhas or village quacks. With the development of modern healing in Colonial India, native state, like Cooch Behar was not far away from the same development. Soon the authority realized the need of Western healing system. Finally, In June 1814, the Commissioner of Cooch Behar State, MacLeod applied to the British Government to send a qualified medical man to the state but due to scarcity of such men the Government were unable to send one.

In November 1819 an Indian doctor was sent to Koch Bihar on a salary of Rs. 40 per month. But there is no record about his qualification or training. In 1841 Maharaja Sibendranarayan applied to the British Government for a qualified medical man. In February 1842 Dr. Siam Charan Sarkar, a graduate of the medical college of Calcutta was appointed medical Officer of the Maharaja's Court. In 1846 the Maharaja asked for a European Medical Officer

and Dr. Ralph Moore was appointed on a salary of Rs.350 to be the Medical Officer of the Maharaja.[4]

Although there was a qualified medical officer since 1842, however, there was no attempt to open any hospital or dispensary before Col. Haughton. He took charge the administration during the period of Maharaja Nripendranarayan. Finally, in 1865, the first dispensary was opened at Cooch Behar in the charge of a Sub-Assistant Surgeon. It was a humble establishment, that was partly supported by local subscriptions. This was the first steps of modern medical establishment in the princely state of Cooch Behar. The example shows the initial economic problem of the state to generate the infrastructure of the health care. However, simultaneously it indicates the joint collaboration and understanding between state and subjects in the question of healthcare and development.

In 1869-70, the medical establishment was consisted of a sub-assistant surgeon, two unqualified doctor sand four compounders. The private subscriptions were done away with from this year and the establishment paid from the state revenues. The sub-assistant surgeon remained in-charge of the medical establishment till May 1873 when the post of civil surgeon was created and Dr. Thomas Briscoe was appointed to the post. Henceforth an assistant surgeon remained in charge of the dispensary at Cooch Behar. In the year 1882-83 Civil Surgeon Dr. Briscoe remarks Assistant Surgeon Bireshur Palit is in charge of the Sudder Dispensary, his professional abilities are excellent, he takes great interest in his work, and has made the dispensary very popular.[5]

INDOOR FACILITY IN COOCH BIHAR SUDDER DISPENSARY:

The Cooch Behar Sudder Dispensary was opened in 1865 AD. All the dispensaries and hospitals were opened at the state headquarters and at the sub-divisional headquarters and were visited mainly by the people of the towns and those living nearby. The rural people remained uninterest to the to the scientific treatment and still had faith in Ojhas and village quacks. When there was a serious cholera epidemic in 1881 only a few of the cases came to the hospitals. General healthiness was comparatively better in the year 1876-77. But the condition deteriorated in next year. Civil Surgeon of the state Dr. Thomas Briscoe point out that the growth of patient quantity not only for the growing popularity of the Dispensary.

The table shows the total number of annual attendances of indoor patients, percentage of annual indoor patients in the following years in Cooch Behar Sudder Dispensary and percentage of Annual indoor patients with respect of total population in Cooch Behar Sadder according to census report.

Table No-1

Indoor Patients in Cooch Behar Sudder Dispensary

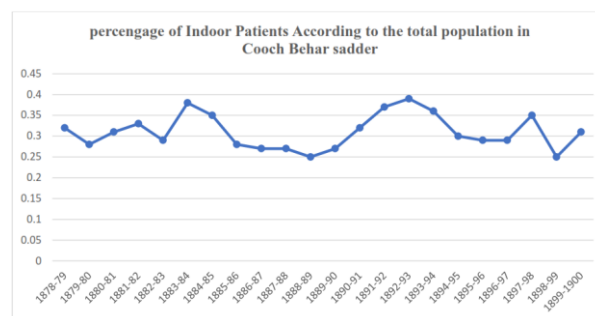
Year	No. of Indoor Patients in Sudder Dispensary	% of Indoor Patients in Sudder Dispensary	Total No. of Indoor & Outdoor Patients in sudder Dispensary	% of Indoor Patients According to the total population in Cooch Behar sadder	Census	Total population in Cooch Behar Sadder
1878-79	450	7.75	5810	0.32	1881	139294
1879-80	394	6.60	5964	0.28	1881	139294
1880-81	435	5.15	8452	0.31	1881	139294
1881-82	459	5.32	8631	0.33	1881	139294
1882-83	407	4.95	8228	0.29	1881	139294
1883-84	526	6.09	8630	0.38	1881	139294
1884-85	483	5.53	8703	0.35	1881	139294
1885-86	385	4.51	8527	0.28	1881	139294
1886-87	373	4.61	8088	0.27	1881	139294
1887-88	374	4.67	8018	0.27	1881	139294
1888-89	350	4.08	8564	0.25	1881	139294
1889-90	383	5.06	7568	0.27	1881	139294
1890-91	414	5.59	7409	0.32	1891	129243
1891-92	475	5.59	8502	0.37	1891	129243
1892-93	500	6.28	7952	0.39	1891	129243
1893-94	459	5.37	8553	0.36	1891	129243
1894-95	395	4.61	8563	0.30	1891	129243
1895-96	378	4.42	8551	0.29	1891	129243
1896-97	372	4.75	7829	0.29	1891	129243
1897-98	457	7.09	6445	0.35	1891	129243
1898-99	326	4.46	7317	0.25	1891	129243
1899-1900	401	5.54	7235	0.31	1891	129243

Source:

1. Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch Behar State 1878-79 to 1899- 1900 and
2. West Bengal District Gazetteers, Koch Bihar by Durgadas Majumder, Government of West Bengal, 1977, p.183
3. Mitra, Ashok, Census of India-1951, West Bengal, District Census Handbook, Coochbehar, P.I

The above table shows that the Indoor facility was not good in Cooch Behar Sudder Dispensary because the average of the following year was 5.36% comparatively the average of Outdoor patients was 94.64%. It was also clear that among the Cooch Behar Sadder population only 0.35% people availed Indoor facility which was very low. In the year 1892-93 the highest number of indoor patients was 500. After that the number of indoor patients was decreased in the late nineteenth century.

Table.1.1



The above table shows the percentage of the indoor patients according to the total population in Cooch Behar sadder. From the above it is clear to us that very limited population of Cooch Behar sadder availed the outdoor facilities. Only 0.25 - 0.39 percent population of Cooch Behar sadder

enjoyed the modern medical facilities. In the year 1892-93 the highest percentage of indoor patients in respect of total population was 0.39%.

OUTDOOR FACILITY IN COOCH BEHAR SUDDER DISPENSARY:

The following statement shows the total number of annual Outdoor patients, percentage of annual Outdoor patients in the following years in Cooch Behar Sudder Dispensary and percentage of Annual Outdoor patients with respect total population in Cooch Behar Sudder according to census report.

Table No-2

Outdoor Patients in Cooch Behar Sudder Dispensary

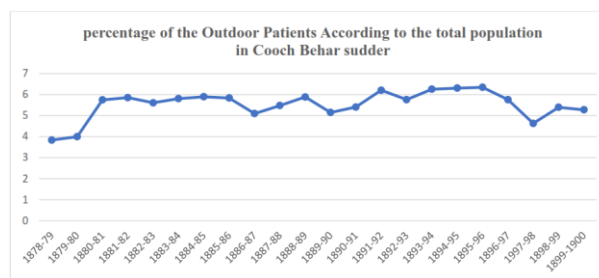
Year	No. of Outdoor Patients in Sudder Dispensary	% of Outdoor patients in Sudder Dispensary	Total No of Indoor & Outdoor patients in Sudder Dispensary	% of the Outdoor Patients According to the total population in Cooch Behar sudder	Census	Total population in Cooch Behar Sudder
1878-79	5360	92.25	5810	3.84	1881	139294
1879-80	5570	93.39	5964	4.00	1881	139294
1880-81	8017	94.85	8452	5.75	1881	139294
1881-82	8172	94.68	8631	5.86	1881	139294
1882-83	7821	95.03	8228	5.61	1881	139294
1883-84	8104	93.90	8630	5.81	1881	139294
1884-85	8220	94.45	8703	5.90	1881	139294
1885-86	8142	95.48	8527	5.84	1881	139294
1886-87	7115	87.96	8088	5.10	1881	139294
1887-88	7644	95.33	8018	5.48	1881	139294
1888-89	8214	95.91	8564	5.89	1881	139294
1889-90	7185	94.93	7568	5.15	1891	129243
1890-91	6995	94.41	7409	5.41	1891	129243
1891-92	8027	94.41	8502	6.21	1891	129243
1892-93	7452	93.71	7952	5.76	1891	129243
1893-94	8094	94.63	8553	6.26	1891	129243
1894-95	8168	95.38	8563	6.31	1891	129243
1895-96	8213	96.04	8551	6.35	1891	129243
1896-97	7457	95.24	7829	5.76	1891	129243
1897-98	5988	92.90	6445	4.63	1891	129243
1898-99	6991	95.54	7317	5.40	1891	129243
1899-1900	6834	94.45	7235	5.28	1891	129243

Source:

1. Annual Administrative Report of the Cooch Behar State 1878-79 to 1899- 1900 and
2. West Bengal District Gazetteers, Koch Bihar by Durgadas Majumder, Government of West Bengal, 1977, p.183
3. Mitra, Ashok, Census of India-1951, West Bengal, District Census Handbook, Coochbehar, P.I

The above statement shows that the peoples of Cooch Behar Sudder were much enjoyed the outdoor facilities in the Cooch Behar Sudder Dispensary. The average percentage of outdoor patients in the following years was 94.26%. But only 5.52% populations were availed outdoor facilities in cooch Behar sudder according to Census report of the state.

Table-2.1



The above table shows the percentage of the Outdoor patients in respect of total population in Cooch Behar sudder. The percentage of outdoor patients were increased day by day. But only 3.84 to 6.35percentage of total populations were availed the modern outdoor facilities in Cooch Behar sadder. Beside it more than 93% populations were depends on indigenous (traditional) medical systems instead of modern treatment.

TOTAL INDOOR & OUTDOOR PATIENTS IN COOCH BEHAR SUDDER:

The following table shows the total number of annual indoor & outdoor patients and percentage of Annual indoor & outdoor patients with respect of total population in Cooch Behar Sudder according to Census report.

Table No-3

Total Indoor & Outdoor Patients in Cooch Behar Sudder:

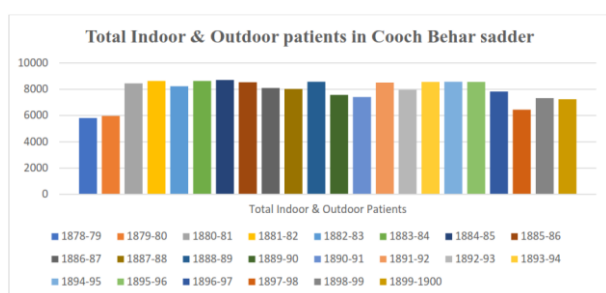
Year	Total Indoor & Outdoor Patients	% of Total Indoor & Outdoor Patients According to the total population in Cooch Behar Sudder	Census	Total Population in Cooch Behar Sudder
1878-79	5810	4.17	1881	139294
1879-80	5964	4.28	1881	139294
1880-81	8452	6.06	1881	139294
1881-82	8631	6.19	1881	139294
1882-83	8228	5.90	1881	139294
1883-84	8630	6.19	1881	139294
1884-85	8703	6.24	1881	139294
1885-86	8527	6.12	1881	139294
1886-87	8088	5.80	1881	139294
1887-88	8018	5.75	1881	139294
1888-89	8564	6.14	1881	139294
1889-90	7568	5.85	1891	129243
1890-91	7409	5.73	1891	129243
1891-92	8502	6.57	1891	129243
1892-93	7952	6.15	1891	129243
1893-94	8553	6.61	1891	129243
1894-95	8563	6.62	1891	129243
1895-96	8551	6.61	1891	129243
1896-97	7829	6.05	1891	129243
1897-98	6445	4.98	1891	129243
1898-99	7317	5.66	1891	129243
1899-1900	7235	5.59	1891	129243

The above table shows the facility of modern healing system according to the total population in Cooch Behar sadder. In the year 1880-81 the increasing rate was very high in the case of total number of Indoor & Outdoor patients. Civil Surgeon Dr. Thomas Briscoe remarks "The sick amounting to 865 of the Public Works Department have this year been included with the out-patients attending the Sudder Dispensary; altogether there has been an increase of 1830 Out-patients, making a total increase of 2307 in the attendance of out and in - patients, on the preceding year." [6] But the above table also shows the percentage of the Out and In-

patients were below 7% which was very low with respect of total population in Cooch Behar Sadder. Beside it 93% population were out of modern healing system in the sadder. So, we should assume from the above table most of the people preferred indigenous or traditional healing system in Cooch Behar Sadder.

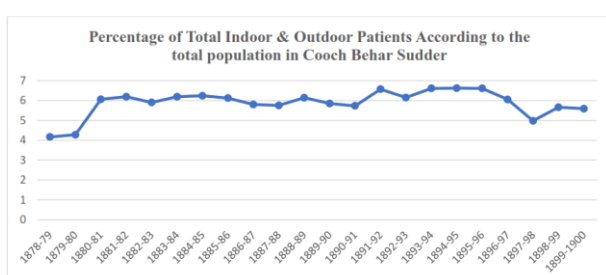
In the year 1895-96 Civil Surgeon Dr. Gupta report as follows regarding the attendance and mortality – “The total number of patients treated in the Sadder Dispensary during the year under report was 8591 against 8563 of the previous year. Of these 8213 against 8168 of the previous year were out-patients and 378 against 395 were in-patients. The figure shows that while there has been a slight falling off in the number of in-patients there has been a corresponding increase in the number of out-patients. This is due to the fact that during the year special care was taken in the selection and admission of in-patients. The daily average of out-patients was 57.62 against 63.39 of the previous year and that of in-patients was 13.40 against 17.49 of the previous year”. [7]

Table-3.1



The above table shows the year to years variation of total indoor and outdoor patients in Cooch Behar sadder dispensary.

Table- 3.2



The table- 3.2 shows the percentage of the total indoor and outdoor patients in respect of total population in Cooch Behar Sadder. It is clear from the above that the scope of modern facilities was very limited during the nineteenth century. Only 4.17 to 6.62 percentage of total population of Cooch Behar availed the modern medicine facilities. In the year 1895-96 Civil Surgeon Dr. Gupta report as follows regarding the attendance and mortality – “The total number of patients treated in the Sadder

Dispensary during the year under report was 8591 against 8563 of the previous year. Of these 8213 against 8168 of the previous year were out-patients and 378 against 395 were in-patients. The figure shows that while there has been a slight falling off in the number of in-patients there has been a corresponding increase in the number of out-patients. This is due to the fact that during the year special care was taken in the selection and admission of in-patients. The daily average of out-patients was 57.62 against 63.39 of the previous year and that of in-patients was 13.40 against 17.49 of the previous year”.

TOTAL MEDICAL EXPENDITURE IN COOCH BEHAR SUDDER DISPENSARY:

The following tables shows the annual expenditure of the Cooch Behar Sadder Dispensary for all the purpose.

Table-4

Annual Expenditure in Cooch Behar Sadder Dispensary:

Year	Total Expenditure		
	Rs.	A.	P.
1878-79	6394	8	2
1879-80	5606	12	3
1880-81	5506	12	6
1881-82	6531	8	11
1882-83	6338	12	8
1883-84	7067	7	0
1884-85	6142	11	6
1885-86	7571	11	1
1886-87	7487	14	1
1887-88	7909	15	4
1888-89	7860	8	8
1889-90	7659	8	9
1890-91	7834	8	2
1891-92	8128	8	11
1892-93	7741	15	1
1893-94	5920	10	4
1894-95	4503	5	8
1895-96	4572	4	8
1896-97	5421	7	2
1897-98	5708	5	3
1898-99	5424	4	0
1899-1900	5530	14	11

The above table shows per years annual expenditure in Cooch Behar Sadder Dispensary. The total amount of expenditure was for the purpose of establishment charges, contingent charges, travelling allowance, stationery charges, diet, clothing and bedding, cost of medicine issued to patients and sold, disposal of the dead etc. In the year 1880-81 the civil surgeon Dr. Briscoe remarks the great reduction in the cost of treating each patient at the Sadder dispensary is owing to

the increased number of patients attending during the year also to food being cheaper.[8]

CONCLUSION:

The study concludes that though the Sudder Dispensary was opened in the year 1865 but in the year from 1878 to 1900 the scope of modern healing system was very limited. According to the population ratio the Indoor treatment was very low and Outdoor treatment was gradually more popular among the people of Cooch Behar. Only 7% of the total population enjoyed Outdoor and Indoor facility in Cooch Behar Sudder which was very low. Beside it 93% of the total population did not get the modern healing system. Because there were series of problems like superstition, false tradition and religious obstacles behind the development of modern medical system in the Cooch Behar Sudder. The common people were great believer of indigenous or traditional healing system. Due to rumours and superstition people participation in the modern healing system was very poor. Instead of these, the people of royal family and the common people of the Cooch Behar Sudder gradually accepted the modern healing system.

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