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The usefulness of scientific research in Homeopathy - Pilot study.

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Abstract

Introduction: Homeopathy is being questioned mostly in developed countries, despite the growing body of basic and clinical research with positive results. Even though many meta-analyses show positive findings, there is an urge for large clinical studies to improve the perception that there is an effect. To test the awareness of homeopaths in the research needs, a survey was developed asking about usefulness, and everyday use of research findings. **Methods:** The respondents were identified by the degree of academic study, age, experience, kind of practice, region of practice, and scientific background. To understand the predominant thoughts, questions were asked to define whether Homeopathy should be considered and studied as science if the homeopath regularly reads scientific papers, and of what kind. Also, the definition of which kind of literature contributes the most to ameliorating the quality of medical attention, the usefulness of basic and clinical research, the source of the research budget, and the priorities for future research. The forms were created in Spanish and Portuguese, and distributed by email, mostly in South America during July and part of August 2023. **Results:** A total of 463 responses were analyzed. More than 90% of the respondents were practicing homeopaths and 209 were MDs, 64% participated in a scientific study in the past. When asked about developing homeopathy, 50% preferred clinical research, 19% meta-analysis, 11% basic research, 11% HPT and 6% clinical verification. Funding should be provided by public institutions, Universities, and pharmaceutical companies. When asked about prescribing 76% relied on experience transmitted by masters, 66% on their own experience, and 48% on clinical research. Clinical research was found useful in 88% of the sample. There was no clear response when asked about sources for improving clinical practice. **Conclusion:** Homeopaths are informed about scientific research but have no clear perception of how it may improve clinical practice.

Keywords: scientific research, clinical practice, survey.

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