

Perception of the Public Towards Homeopathy with Special Focus on Kolkata City, West Bengal: An Analysis

Mani Sankar Maiti ¹, Dr. Nelson Jewas ²

^{1,2}Department of Public Health, Mansarovar Global University, Sehore, MP

Abstract:

Homeopathy is one of the prominent systems of complementary and alternative medicine practiced globally, with a particularly strong presence in India due to its long history, cultural acceptance, and institutional support. Homeopathy has emerged as one of the most widely practiced forms of complementary and alternative medicine in India, attracting diverse public opinion regarding its effectiveness, accessibility, and scientific credibility. Public trust in homeopathy is largely influenced by personal experiences, family traditions, cultural beliefs and recommendations from practitioners and peers. In this article, perception of public towards homeopathy with special focus to Kolkata city, West Bengal: an analysis has been discussed.

Keywords: Perception, Public, Homeopathy, Kolkata.

I. INTRODUCTION:

Homeopathy is institutionalized through formal education, regulatory frameworks, and integration into national healthcare policies. Its widespread acceptance can be attributed to multiple factors- the perceived safety profile, affordability, personalized treatment regimens, and cultural familiarity among diverse population groups (Brien, S. et al., 2011). Particularly in urban centers such as Kolkata-a city with a rich history of intellectual engagement with health and healing paradigms - homeopathy occupies a visible space in the healthcare ecosystem, ranging from dedicated clinics and pharmacies to informal community discussions. Despite its popularity, the perception of homeopathy among the public remains varied (Harleen, K. et al., 2019). While some consumer's express strong faith in its therapeutic outcomes, others critique its efficacy due to the lack of robust scientific evidence by certain standards (Sarangi, M.R. et al., 2019). Moreover, public attitudes are shaped not only by personal experience and cultural belief systems but also by social influence, education, media discourse, and accessibility of healthcare options (Manchanda, R. et al., 2017). Understanding these perceptions is crucial because they influence health-seeking behavior, treatment adherence, and broader public health outcomes (Vetrivelan, V. & Yoganandan, G., 2020). Kolkata's pluralistic medical landscape which includes allopathic, Ayurvedic, Unani, and homeopathic services presents a unique setting for examining the interplay between traditional beliefs, modern medical awareness and individual healthcare preferences. The objective of the study was to an analysis on perception of public towards homeopathy with special focus to Kolkata City, West Bengal.

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research methodology refers to the systematic and theoretical examination of the methods employed in a certain field. It encompasses the theoretical analysis of the behaviors and principles. It advocates employing various strategies and tactics to gather substantial data and empirical evidence on a large scale.

Study Area: Kolkata city (South, North, East, Central), West Bengal.

Variables:

Dependent Variables: Gender, Age, Religion, Marital Status, Educational Qualification, Occupation, Monthly Income, Type of family.

Independent Variables: Perception, Homeopathy.

Research Design: In this research, quantitative research design has been used.

Primary Data: In this research, primary data has been used.

Sampling Plan: In this research, simple random sampling plan has been used.

Sample Size: 560.

Methodology: The respondents were taken from the selected areas of Kolkata, West Bengal. After clearing the research objectives, the structured questionnaires and 5 Point Likert Scale sheet were distributed in favor of each respondent. Sufficient time was given in favor of each respondent. Then, after collection of the sheets, these were preserved for further data analysis and interpretation.

Research Tools: In this research, structured questionnaires (5 Point Likert Scale sheet) were used.

Abbreviations Used: Strongly Agree (SA-5 points), Agree (A-4 points), Neutral (N-3 points), Disagree (D-2 points), Strongly Disagree (SD-1 point). **Tools Used:**

- Patient’s socio-demographic features tool.
- Perception and satisfaction level of public on the homeopathic services scale.

Data Analysis and Interpretation: In this research, pie charts were used.

III. DATA ANALYSIS, INTERPRETATION, RESULTS & DISCUSSION

(a) Personal Information:

Table 1. Gender:

Options	Respondents	%
Male	280	50
Female	280	50
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

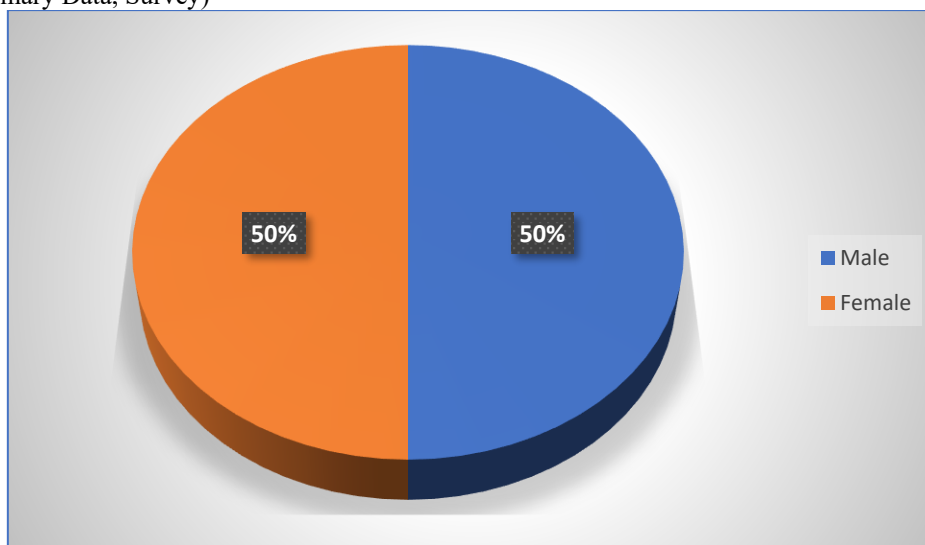


Figure 1. Gender (%)

As per above data analysis & interpretation, it was observed that the male respondents were 50% & female respondents were 50%.

Table 2. Age in years:

Options	Respondents	%
20-30 years	154	27.5
31-40 years	173	30.90
41-50 years	110	19.64
51-60 years	123	21.96
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

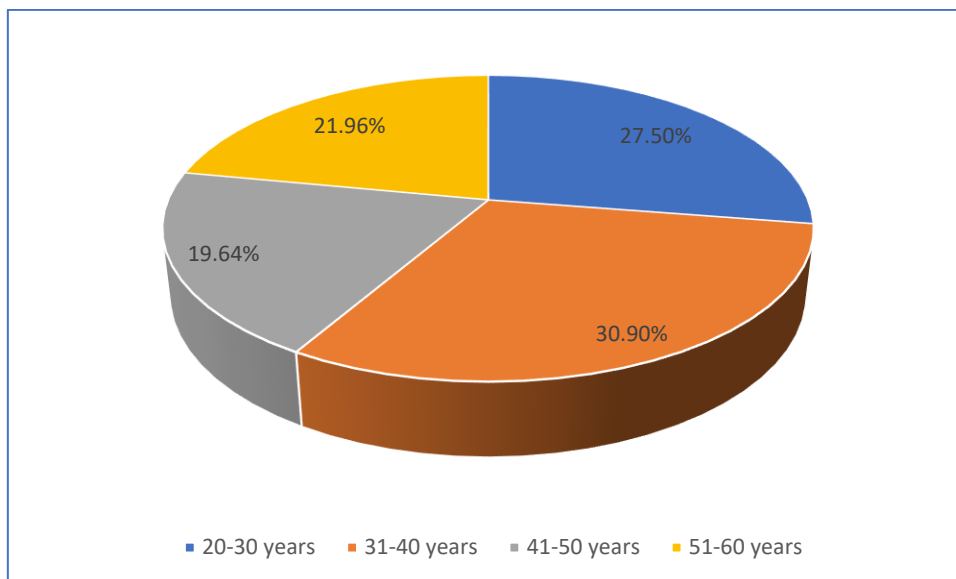


Figure 2. Age in years (%)

As per above data analysis & interpretation, it was observed that the age (in years) were 20-30 years: 27.5%, 31-40 years: 30.90%, 41-50 years: 19.64% & 51-60 years: 21.96%.

(b) Patient's Socio-Demographic Features:

Table 3. Religion:

Options	Respondents	%
Hindu	282	50.36
Muslim	136	24.29
Christian	89	15.89
Others	53	9.46
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

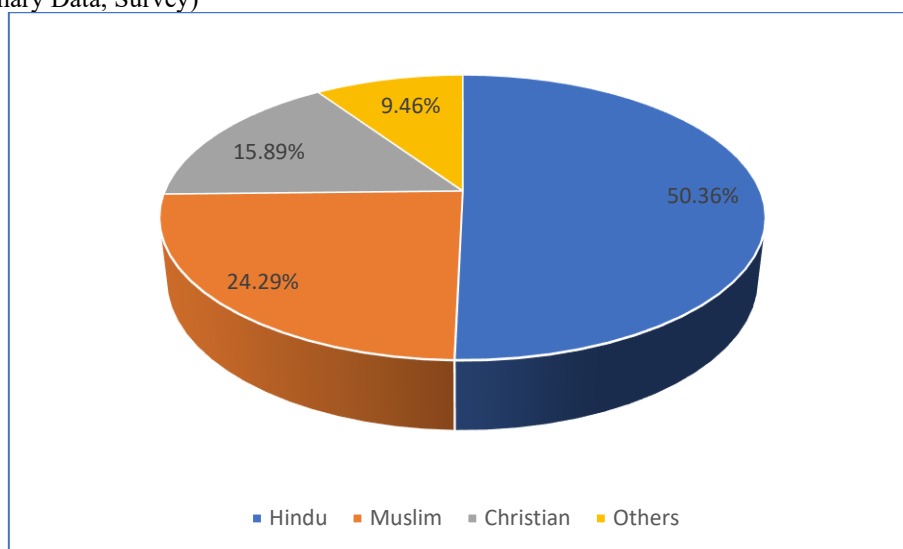


Figure 3. Religion (%)

As per above data analysis & interpretation, it was observed that the respondents of Hindu: 50.36%, Muslim:24.29%, Christian: 15.89% & others: 9.46% belongs to religion.

Table 4. Marital Status:

Options	Respondents	%
Married	291	51.96
Unmarried	203	36.25
Others	66	11.79

Total	560	100
--------------	------------	------------

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

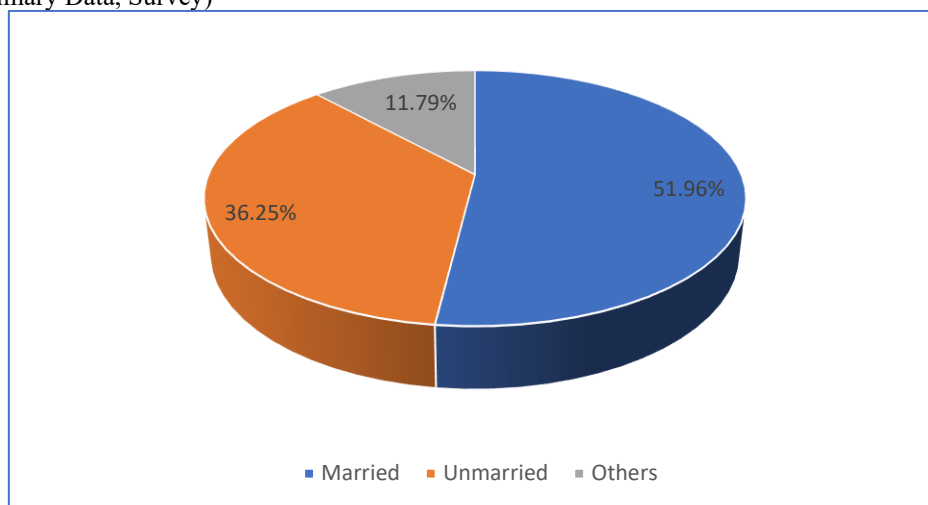


Figure 4. Marital Status (%)

As per above data analysis & interpretation, it was observed that the respondents of married: 51.96%, unmarried: 36.25% & others: 11.79% belongs to marital status.

Table 5. Educational Qualification:

Options	Respondents	%
Upto 10 th Passed	76	13.57
Upto 12 th Passed	85	15.18
Diploma/Graduation	248	44.29
Post-Graduation	104	18.57
Others	47	8.39
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

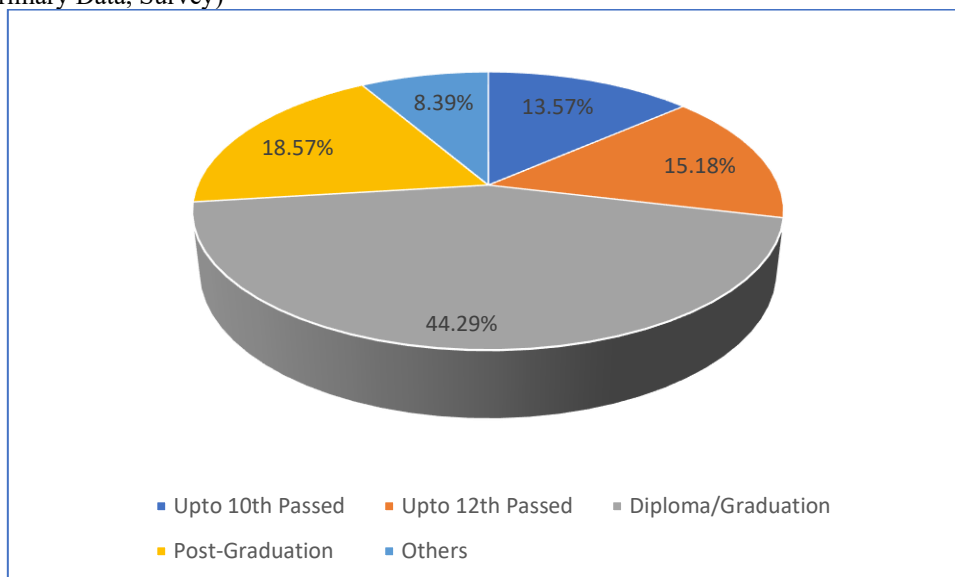


Figure 5. Educational Qualification (%)

As per above data analysis & interpretation, it was observed that the respondents of up to 10th passed: 13.57%, up to 12th passed: 15.18%, diploma/graduation: 44.29%, post-graduation: 18.57% & others: 8.39% belongs to educational qualification.

Table 6. Occupation:

Options	Respondents	%
Government job	99	17.67
Private job	206	36.79

Business	45	8.04
Unemployed	116	20.71
Others	94	16.79
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

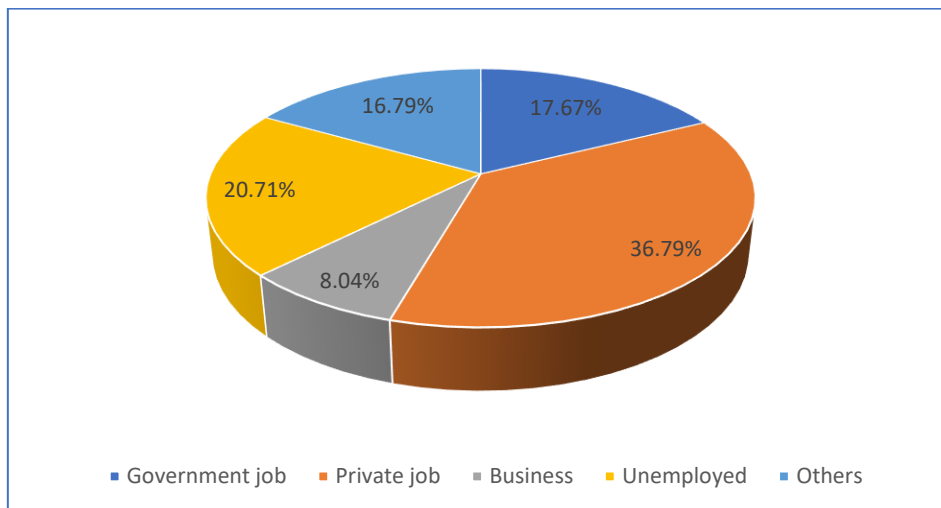


Figure 6. Occupation (%)

As per above data analysis & interpretation, it was observed that the respondents of government job: 17.67%, private job: 36.79%, business: 8.04%, unemployed: 20.71% and others: 16.79% belongs to occupation.

Table 7. Monthly Income (INR):

Options	Respondents	%
Below 10,000/-	244	43.57
10,001/- to 20,000/-	142	25.36
20,001/- to 30,000/-	68	12.14
30,001/- and above	106	18.93
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

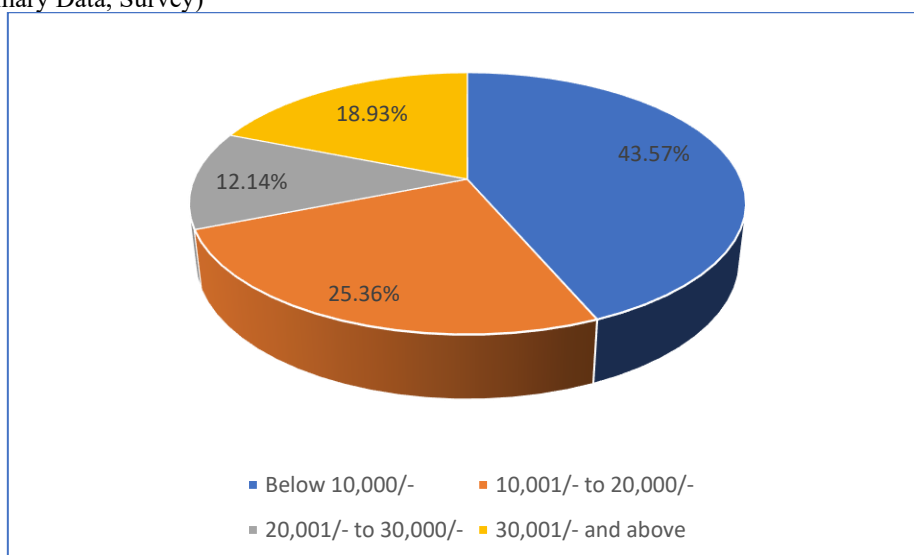


Figure 7. Monthly Income (INR) (%)

As per above data analysis & interpretation, it was observed that the respondents of below INR 10,000/-: 43.57%, INR 10,001/- to 20,000/-: 25.36%, INR 20,001/- to 30,000/-: 12.14% & INR 30,001/- and above: 18.93% belongs to monthly income.

Table 8. Type of family:

Options	Respondents	%
Nuclear family	333	59.46
Joint family	227	40.54
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

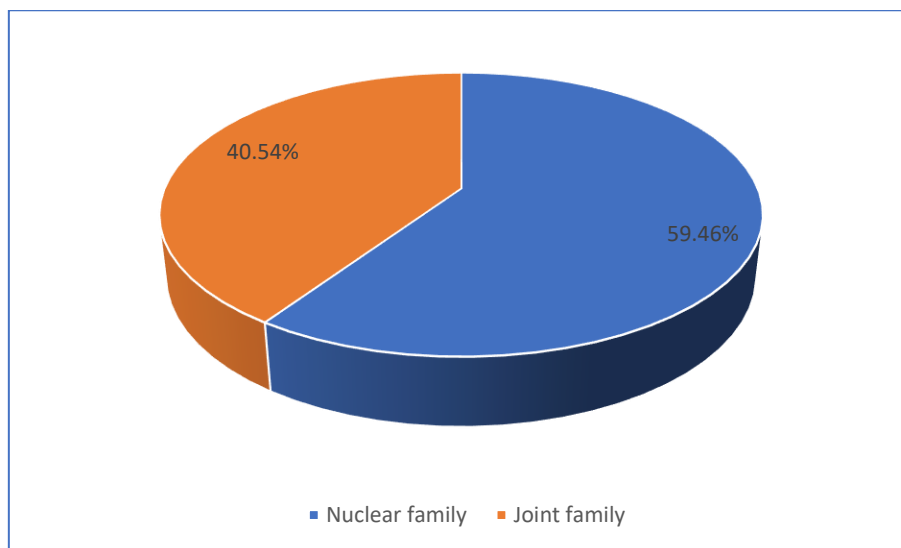


Figure 8. Type of family (%)

As per above data analysis & interpretation, it was observed that the respondents of nuclear family: 59.46% & joint family: 40.54% belongs to type of family.

(c) Perception and Satisfaction Level of Public on the Homeopathic Services:

Table 9. Awareness and Acceptance:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	106	18.93
A	190	33.93
N	27	4.82
D	120	21.43
SD	117	20.89
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

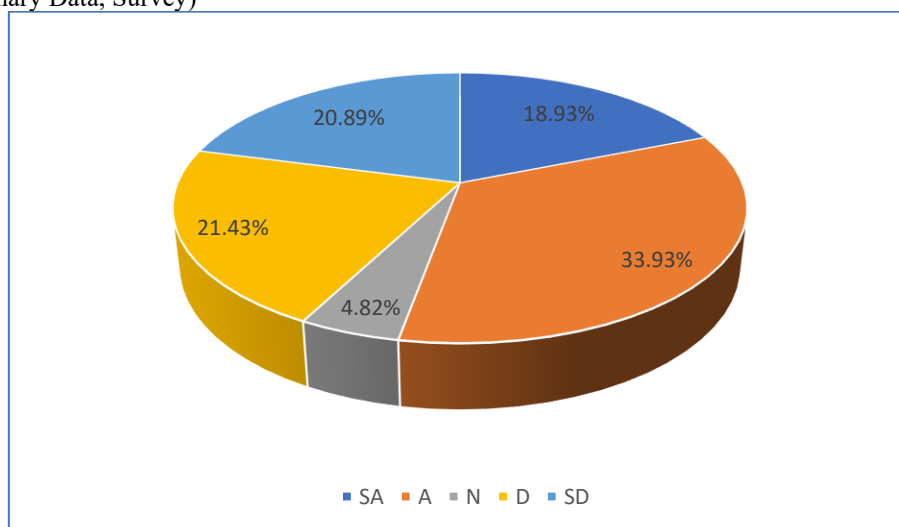


Figure 9. Awareness and Acceptance (%)

As per data analysis & interpretation, the % of respondents were SA: 18.93%, A: 33.93%, N: 4.82%, D: 21.43% & SD: 20.89%.

Table 10. Trust in Traditional Healing:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	169	30.18
A	223	39.82
N	20	3.57
D	111	19.82
SD	37	6.61
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

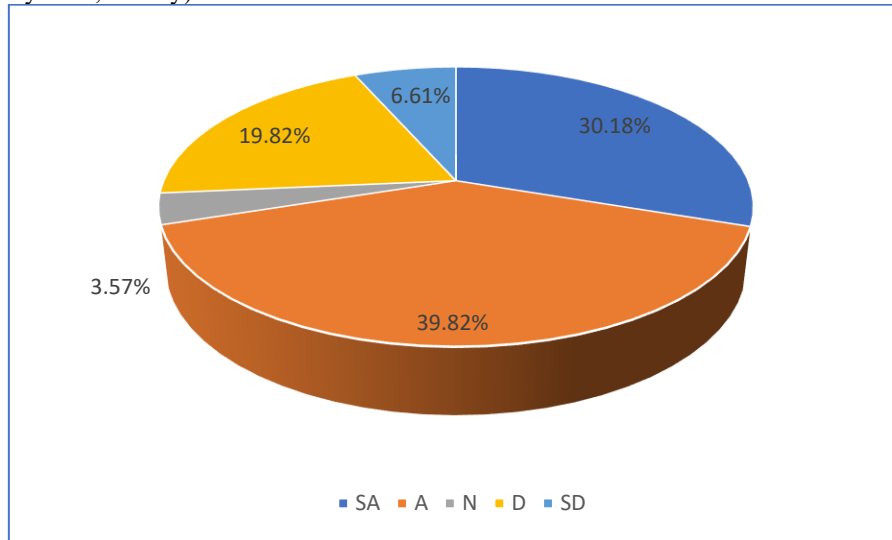


Figure 10. Trust in Traditional Healing (%)

As per data analysis & interpretation, the % of respondents were SA: 30.18%, A: 39.82%, N: 3.57%, D: 19.82% & SD: 6.61%.

Table 11. Accessibility and Affordability:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	156	27.86
A	235	41.96
N	26	4.64
D	83	14.82
SD	60	10.72
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

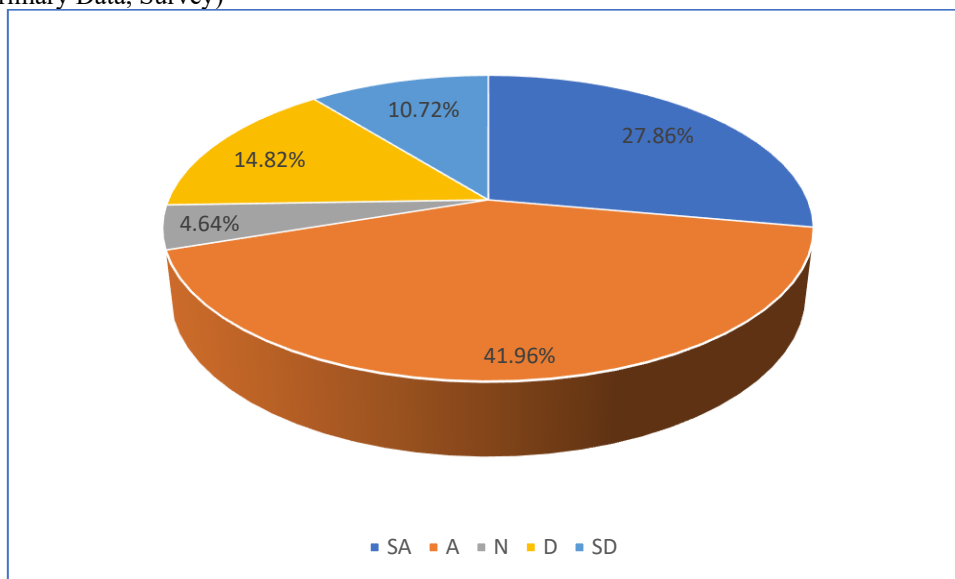


Figure 11. Accessibility and Affordability (%)

As per data analysis & interpretation, the % of respondents were SA: 27.86%, A: 41.96%, N: 4.64%, D: 14.82% & SD: 10.72%.

Table 12. Skepticism and Criticism:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	72	12.86
A	114	20.36
N	27	4.82
D	218	38.93
SD	129	23.03
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

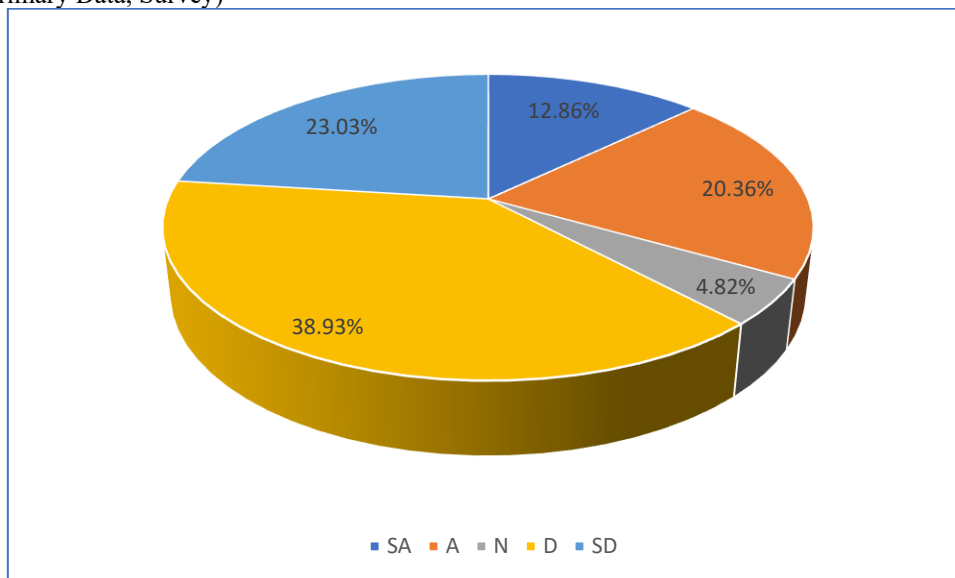


Figure 12. Skepticism and Criticism (%)

As per data analysis & interpretation, the % of respondents were SA: 12.86%, A: 20.36%, N: 4.82%, D: 38.93% & SD: 23.03%.

Table 13. Comparative Perception:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	166	29.64
A	178	31.78
N	24	4.30
D	145	25.89
SD	47	8.39
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

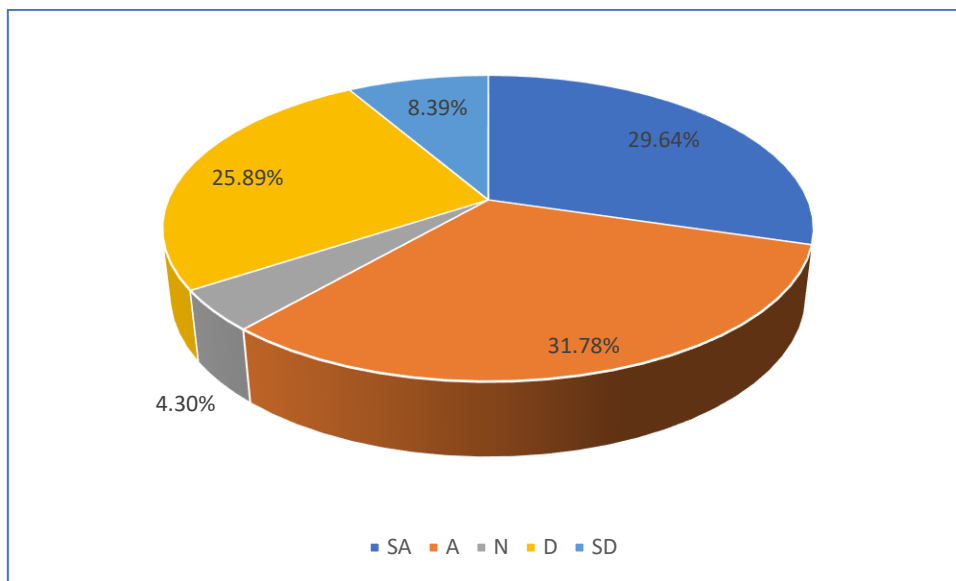


Figure 13. Comparative Perception (%)

As per data analysis & interpretation, the % of respondents were SA: 29.64%, A: 31.78%, N: 4.30%, D: 25.89% & SD: 8.39%.

Table 14. Quality of Services:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	164	29.28
A	189	33.75
N	31	5.54
D	119	21.25
SD	57	10.18
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

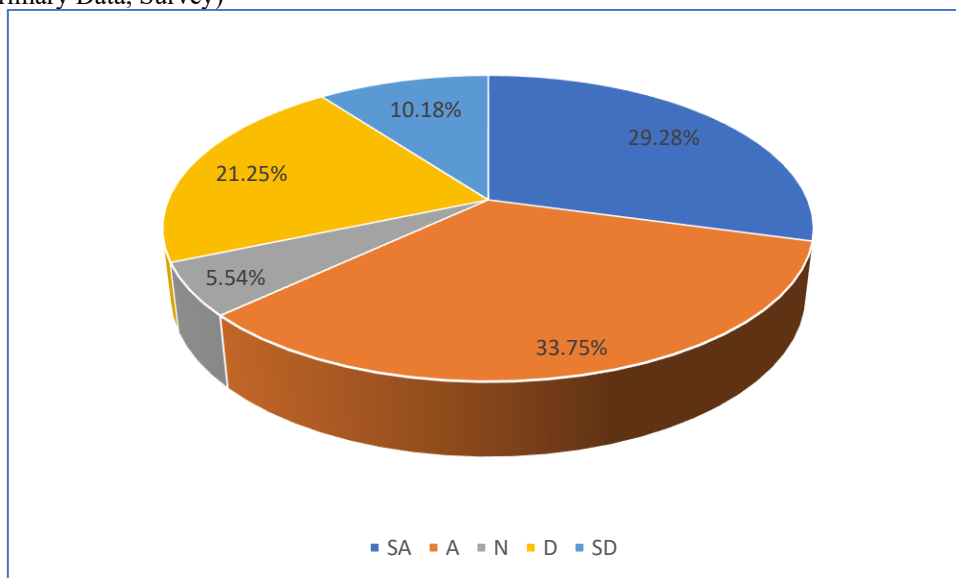


Figure 14. Quality of Services (%)

As per data analysis & interpretation, the % of respondents were SA: 29.28%, A: 33.75%, N: 5.54%, D: 21.25% & SD: 10.18%.

Table 15. Treatment Outcomes:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	155	27.68
A	174	31.07
N	38	6.78
D	105	18.75

SD	88	15.72
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

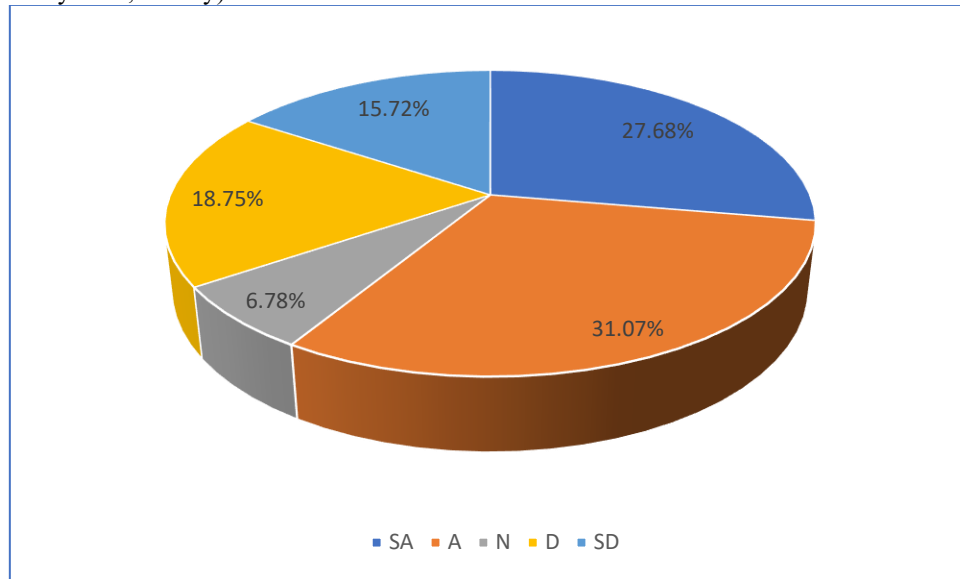


Figure 15. Treatment Outcomes (%)

As per data analysis & interpretation, the % of respondents were SA: 27.68%, A: 31.07%, N: 6.78%, D: 18.75% & SD: 15.72%.

Table 16. Affordability:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	166	29.64
A	203	36.25
N	22	3.93
D	118	21.07
SD	51	9.11
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

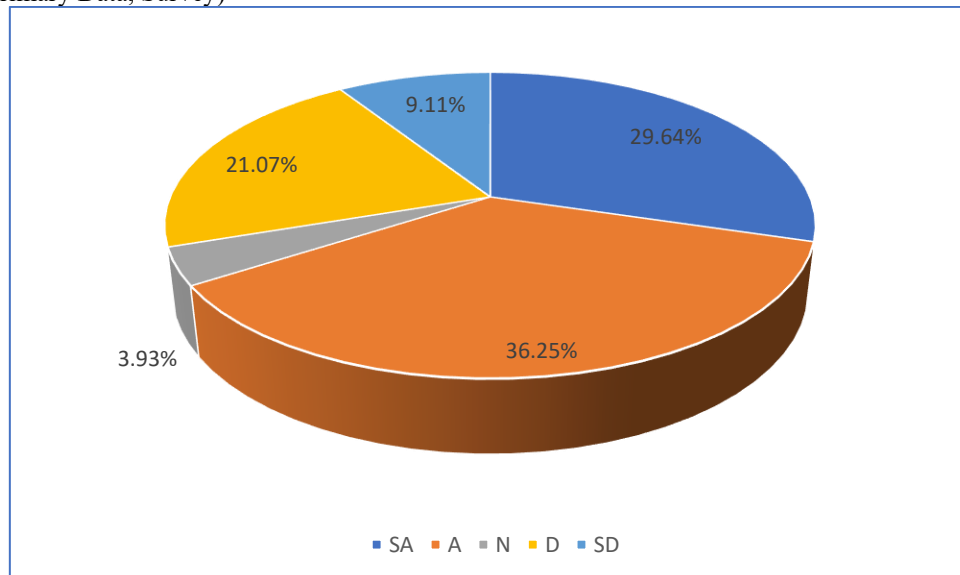


Figure 16. Affordability (%)

As per data analysis & interpretation, the % of respondents were SA: 29.64%, A: 36.25%, N: 3.93%, D: 21.07% & SD: 9.11%.

Table 17. Doctor patient relationship:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	183	32.67

A	202	36.07
N	27	4.82
D	97	17.32
SD	51	9.12
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

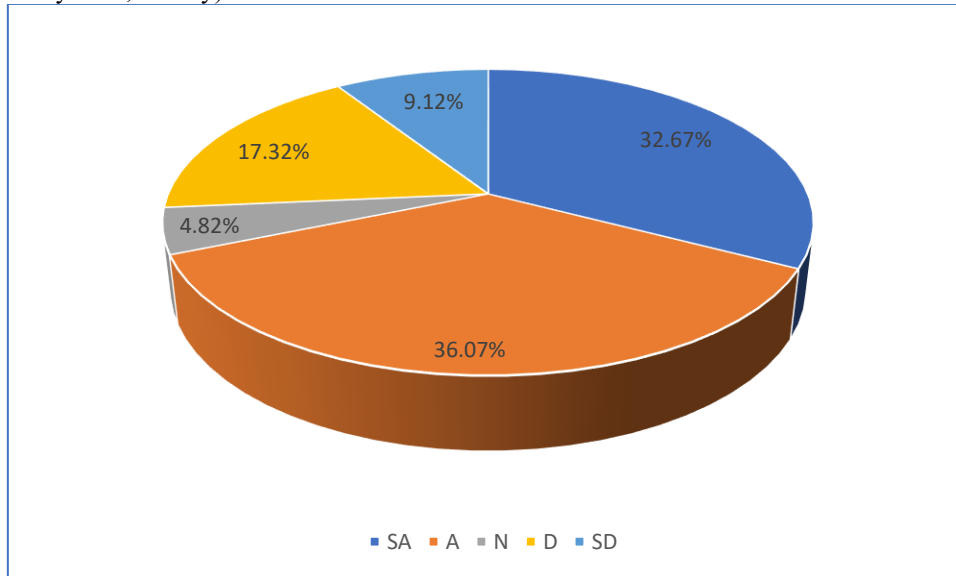


Figure 17. Doctor patient relationship (%)

As per data analysis & interpretation, the % of respondents were SA: 32.67%, A: 36.07%, N: 4.82%, D: 17.32% & SD: 9.12%.

Table 18. Limitations noted by patients:

Options	Respondents	%
SA	88	15.71
A	149	26.61
N	38	6.79
D	146	26.07
SD	139	24.82
Total	560	100

(Source: Primary Data, Survey)

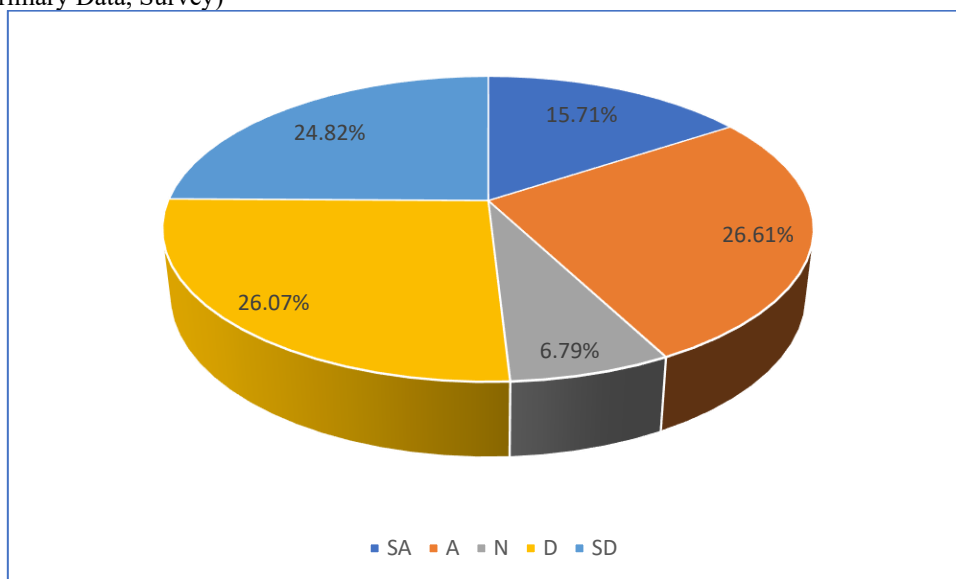


Figure 18. Limitations noted by patients (%)

As per data analysis & interpretation, the % of respondents were SA: 15.71%, A: 26.61%, N: 6.79%, D: 26.07% & SD: 24.82%.

IV. CONCLUSION:

Based on the personal information of the respondents, the gender male & female ratio was equal (50% each). It also observed that the highest age category respondents were from 31-40 years, and the highest age category respondents were from 51-60 years.

According to the patient's socio-demographic features, hindu religion (50.36%) belongs to the highest category of the respondents whereas the others options (9.46%) belongs to the lowest category of the respondents; 51.96% respondents showed married followed by 36.25% unmarried & 11.79% others. Based on educational qualification scenario; diploma/graduation showed highest percentage (44.29%) and others showed lower percentage (8.39%); according to occupation, the highest percentage belongs to private job (36.79%) and lower percentage belongs to others (16.79%); similarly, monthly income option the highest percentage was found INR below 10,000/- (43.57%) and lowest percentage was found INR 20,001/- to 30,000/- (12.14%); the nuclear family belongs to highest percentage (59.46%) & joint family belongs to lowest percentage (40.54%).

Similarly, based on the perception and satisfaction level of public on the homeopathic services; awareness and acceptance indicated highest percentage of Agree (33.93%) and lowest percentage of Neutral (4.82%); trust in traditional healing indicated highest percentage of Agree (39.82%) and lowest percentage of Neutral (3.57%); accessibility and affordability indicated highest percentage of Agree (41.96%) and lowest percentage of Neutral (4.64%); skepticism and criticism indicated highest percentage of Disagree (38.93%) and lowest percentage of Neutral (4.82%); comparative perception indicated highest percentage of Agree (31.78%) and lowest percentage of Neutral (4.30%); quality of services indicated highest percentage of Agree (33.75%) and lowest percentage of Neutral (5.54%); treatment outcomes indicated highest percentage of Agree (31.07%) and lowest percentage of Neutral (6.78%); affordability indicated highest percentage of Agree (31.07%) and lowest percentage of Neutral (6.78%); doctor patient relationship indicated highest percentage of Agree (36.07%) and lowest percentage of Neutral (4.82%); limitations noted by patients indicated highest percentage of Agree (26.61%) and lowest percentage of Neutral (6.79%).

The study on the perception of the public towards homeopathy in Kolkata City reveals that homeopathy continues to hold a significant place in the healthcare choices of the people. Many respondents view it as a safe, affordable, and accessible form of treatment, especially for chronic illnesses and lifestyle-related health issues. The trust in homeopathy is largely rooted in its long historical presence in Kolkata, cultural acceptance, minimal side effects, and affordability compared to conventional medicine.

REFERENCES:

- [1]. Brien, S., Prescott, L.L.P., McDermott, C., Lewith, G. (2011). Homeopathy has clinical benefits in rheumatoid arthritis patients that are attributable to the consultation process but not the homeopathic remedy: a randomized controlled clinical trial. *Rheumatology*, 50(6), 1070-1082.
- [2]. Harleen, K., Chalia, D.S., Manchanda, R.K. (2019). Homeopathy in Public Health in India. *Homeopathy*, 108(2), 076-087.
- [3]. Manchanda, R. et al. (2017). Patients' Preference for Integrating Homoeopathy Services within the Secondary Health Care Settings in India: The Part 3 (PPIH-3) Study. *Journal of evidence-based Complementary & Alternative Medicine*, 22(2), 251-259.
- [4]. Sarangi, M.R. et al. (2019). A survey regarding awareness and beliefs about Homoeopathy among general population during Magh Mela at Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh, India. *Indian Journal of Research in Homoeopathy*, 13(1), 12-21.
- [5]. Vetriseivan, V. & Yoganandan, G. (2020). Public perception towards homeopathy in Tamil Nadu, India. *Indian Journal of Traditional Knowledge*, 19(3), 675-681.