

Traditional medicines need systematic documentation of data before AI implementation

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With Artificial Intelligence (AI) impacting almost all sectors, its role is increasingly being explored in traditional medicinal practices as well. The AYUSH Ministry is expected to introduce a technical brief on the use of AI in traditional medicines by October. The Ministry announced this at the recently concluded meeting focused on advancing traditional medicine through AI for improved global health led by Vaidya Rajesh Kotecha, secretary, Ministry of AYUSH. Aiming to integrate digital technologies into healthcare, as envisioned in the National Health Policy 2017, the focus will be on the inclusion of e-health, m-health, cloud computing, IoT, and AI to enhance healthcare delivery systems.

AI will help process vast datasets of traditional medical knowledge that will benefit students and practitioners. However, experts feel that there is a need for systematic documentation of traditional



medical knowledge first before AI can be fully implemented in this sector.

AI-integrated tools

Prof Tanuja Nesari, director, All India Institute of Ayurveda (AIIA), says, "The NEP 2020 underscores the integration of AI in AYUSH education to create awareness among students. AI will enhance the accessibility of traditional medicine education through digital tools. AIIA has developed tools like Ayurvediya, a platform offering 13 e-Continuing Medical Education (CME) modules-based courses consisting of 584 videos from all over

India on the Ayurvediya portal, and Ayu-Soft, a decision-making software for diagnosis and treatment. There is an attempt at trying to integrate AI concepts into various areas, including new drug discovery through computational approach. The teachers are receiving training on how to effectively incorporate AI in their teaching methods. The students are using AI-driven research tools and tutoring systems to boost their competence. The doctors are trained in using AI-integrated softwares such as 'Nadi Tarangini' and 'Prakriti software'."

Preparedness of students

Vaidya Jayant Deopujari, chairman, National Commission for Indian System of Medicine (NCISM), says, "NCISM signed an agreement with BITS Pilani KK Birla Goa campus this year to understand the AI-readiness of the faculty and students in NCISM institutes. The project will also assess the sector-specific needs for the creation of AI tools. The existing database is very general and needs to be updated before AI can be properly implemented in this sector."