

Sri Lanka people use traditional medicine for the promotion of health, prevention and treatment of illnesses even though the modern health system has rapidly influenced in Sri Lanka. Sri Lankans practice different methods of treatment for illnesses i.e. supplicating with ritual and supernatural powers, resorting to home remedies (traditional/modern), obtaining treatment from private practitioners (Ayurvedic/modern) and from institutions (Ayurvedic/modern).

The objectives of this research were to find reasons for people choosing between Ayurvedic and modern medicine and to identify the usage of home remedies in these districts. In order to achieve the research objectives, three of 286 patients were interviewed in both traditional medical institutions (TMIs) and modern medical institutions (MMIs) in the districts. The data collection were carried out using individual survey forms which comprised of open-ended questions and in -depth interviews which translated from Sinhala to English.

The results show that 50% of patients used home remedies before seeking institutional treatment. Method of treatment selected by patients depended on several reasons. The main reason why they selected TMIs was that they considered traditional treatment as the most suitable for those symptoms (20.0%). The other reasons why patients chose the present treatment was that the institutions were close to their home (14.4%) and they believe the doctor to be able to treat the symptoms (11.0%)

Patients in the TMIs were more motivated to select it compare to those who were in MMIs. It was concluded those patients' socio-demographic background, transportation, type of symptoms, and formal medical treatment influenced the selection and use of either traditional medicine or modern medicine.