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Conceptual basis of holistic medicine in traditional culture and civilization**Omar Hasan Kasule**

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The paper presents integration as a basic epistemological concept that underlies the concepts of holistic medical practice. Under this concept all phenomena in human life and experience are viewed as an integrated system with balance and equilibrium among and between them. Under the same concept health is holistic encompassing physical, psycho-social, and spiritual components in balance and equilibrium. Holistic medical practice reflecting holistic health is very old in human history. All ancient medical systems (Egyptian, Chinese, Muslim, Indian etc.) were holistic in nature either by design (under an integrative conceptual basis) or default (medical science and technology was not yet developed to a level at which physical health could be dominant). Scientific developments starting in the 16th century and culminating by the 20th century led to the development of the biomedical model in medical practice that emphasized the physical and marginalized the holistic in practice. In recent decades, the negative effects of the biomedical model have been recognized and a call has been made to return to the holistic medicine model. This is difficult to return because of the dominance of reliance technology in modern medicine that marginalizes the human dimension. This paper will use clinical scenarios to illustrate practical difficulties of an integrated holistic approach in medical practice in ambience dominated by the biomedical mode but operating within a traditional cultural and civilizational context.

Biography

Omar Hasan Kasule is a Physician holding a Doctorate in Epidemiology from Harvard University, Boston, USA. His Doctoral research was on the epidemiology of childhood Epstein-Barr virus infection in relation to the risk of Burkitt's Lymphoma and malarial infection. He had experience in Cancer Epidemiology research at the Harvard Dana Farber Cancer Institute and moved to Virginia where he was a Principle Investigator of an NIH national sickle cell screening project. Since 1995, he held appointments as Professor at Faculties of Medicine in Malaysia, Brunei, and Saudi Arabia. He held the appointment of Deputy Dean for research at the International University of Malaysia 1995-2005 and was overseeing the research and ethics committees. He was on the Research Committee of the University of Brunei 2005- 2009. He is currently the Chairman of the Ethics Committee and the Institutional Review Board (IRB) of King Fahad Medical City in Riyadh. He founded and was the first Editor of the *International Medical Journal*. Over the past 18 years he has been teaching and presenting conference papers on clinical ethics and research ethics worldwide. He has published on ethics in journals and on his own websites.

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