OPEN ACCESS
World Journal of Applied Medical Sciences
ISSN: 3049-0200 (Online) | Vol. 2, No. 1, 2025
Website: https://wasrpublication.com/index.php/wjams/

Comparative Evaluation of Siddha Neer Kuri and Modern Urine Analysis: Diagnostic Perspectives and Clinical Relevance – A Narrative Review

Shanthi T.M[1*], Shilpa K[2]

[1]Department of Noi Nadal (Pathology) Including Microbiology, Nandha Siddha Medical College and Hospital, Erode-638052.

[2]Department of Microbiology, Vydehi Institute of Medical and Research Center, Bangalore, Karnataka – 560066

Received: 06/11/2024 | Accepted: 04/12/2024 | Published: 09/01/2025

Abstract:

Background:
Urine analysis is one of the oldest and most widely used diagnostic tools in medical practice, offering valuable insights into physiological and pathological states. Traditional systems such as Siddha medicine utilize qualitative approaches like Neer Kuri and Neikuri to evaluate urine characteristics based on humoral imbalances, while modern medicine employs standardized laboratory techniques for physical, chemical, and microscopic examination. Despite differences in methodology, both systems aim to facilitate early diagnosis and monitoring of diseases (1–4).

Objective:
This narrative review aims to comparatively evaluate Siddha Neer Kuri and modern urine analysis with respect to their principles, diagnostic parameters, clinical applications, and limitations, and to explore the potential for integrative diagnostic approaches.

Methods:
A comprehensive literature review was conducted using classical Siddha texts, standard medical textbooks, and peer-reviewed scientific articles. Key aspects analyzed include Siddha diagnostic principles such as Envagai Thervu, Neer Kuri, and Neikuri, alongside modern urinalysis techniques including dipstick testing, microscopy, and automated analysis. Correlations between traditional observations and modern biochemical parameters were also examined.

Results:
Siddha Neer Kuri evaluates urine based on sensory parameters such as color, odor, froth, and quantity, which are interpreted in relation to Vali, Azhal, and Iyyam imbalances. Neikuri further enhances diagnostic interpretation through oil drop pattern analysis, offering prognostic insights. Modern urinalysis provides quantitative and reproducible data on parameters such as pH, protein, glucose, ketones, bilirubin, and microscopic elements. Comparative analysis reveals that certain Siddha observations, such as frothy urine and discoloration, correspond to modern findings like proteinuria and bilirubinuria. While Siddha methods are cost-effective and accessible, they are subjective and lack standardization. Modern techniques, though accurate and reliable, require infrastructure and trained personnel (5–10).

Conclusion:
Both Siddha and modern urine analysis systems offer valuable diagnostic insights, with distinct advantages and limitations. Integrating traditional qualitative methods with modern quantitative techniques may enhance diagnostic accuracy and accessibility, particularly in resource-limited settings. Further research focusing on standardization and scientific validation of Siddha diagnostic methods is essential to promote their incorporation into evidence-based healthcare.

Keywords: Siddha Medicine; Neer Kuri; Neikuri; Urine Analysis; Traditional Diagnostics; Modern Urinalysis; Integrative Medicine; Proteinuria; Metabolic Disorders; Diagnostic Correlation.

Introduction

Urine analysis has long been recognized as a valuable diagnostic tool in both traditional and modern systems of medicine. As a readily available biological fluid, urine reflects metabolic and physiological changes occurring within the body. Its analysis provides crucial insights into renal function, metabolic disorders, and systemic diseases (1).

Traditional medical systems such as Siddha emphasize holistic approaches to diagnosis, integrating clinical observation with experiential knowledge. In Siddha medicine, urine examination is an essential component of diagnostic evaluation, particularly through methods such as Neer Kuri and Neikuri. These techniques rely on sensory observations and pattern recognition to assess disease states (2).

Modern medicine, on the other hand, employs standardized laboratory techniques to analyze urine. These include physical, chemical, and microscopic examinations that provide quantitative and reproducible results. Advances in automation and analytical

***Corresponding Author**
Shanthi T.M*

instrumentation have significantly enhanced the precision and reliability of urinalysis (3).

Despite their differences, both systems share a common goal of early disease detection and monitoring. A comparative evaluation of Siddha and modern urine analysis can provide valuable insights into their respective strengths and limitations, and may pave the way for integrative diagnostic approaches (4).

Fundamentals of Siddha Diagnostic System

The Siddha system of medicine is based on the concept of three fundamental humors: Vali (Vatham), Azhal (Pitham), and Iyyam (Kabam). These humors govern physiological functions, and their imbalance leads to disease. Diagnosis in Siddha focuses on identifying the disturbed humor and restoring balance (5).

Envagai Thervu, or the eight-fold diagnostic method, forms the cornerstone of Siddha diagnosis. It includes examination of pulse (Nadi), tongue (Naa), voice (Mozhi), eyes (Vizhi), touch (Sparisam), stool (Malam), urine (Neer), and general appearance (Niram). Among these, urine analysis provides significant clinical information (6).

Siddha diagnostics emphasize qualitative assessment rather than quantitative measurement. Observations such as color, consistency, and odor are interpreted in relation to humor imbalance. This approach requires considerable expertise and clinical experience (7).

The holistic nature of Siddha diagnosis allows for early detection of disease and individualized treatment planning. However, the subjective nature of observations poses challenges in standardization and reproducibility (8).

Concept of Neer Kuri in Siddha Medicine

Neer Kuri refers to the preliminary examination of urine based on its physical characteristics. It involves assessment of parameters such as color (Niram), odor (Manam), quantity (Alavu), froth (Nurai), and specific gravity-like observations (9).

Urine color is an important indicator in Siddha diagnosis. For example, yellowish urine may indicate Azhal predominance, while pale or whitish urine may suggest Iyyam imbalance. Similarly, dark-colored urine can indicate dehydration or metabolic disturbances (10).

Odor and froth formation also provide diagnostic clues. Strong or foul odor may indicate infection or metabolic disorders, while persistent froth may suggest proteinuria-like conditions. These observations are interpreted in the context of humor imbalance (11).

Although Neer Kuri is simple and cost-effective, its accuracy depends on the practitioner's expertise. Efforts are needed to correlate these findings with modern biochemical parameters for better validation (12).

Neikuri (Oil Drop Test) as an Advanced Siddha Tool

Neikuri is a specialized diagnostic technique in Siddha medicine involving the addition of a drop of oil to urine and observing the pattern formed. The spread pattern is believed to reflect the nature and severity of disease (13).

Different patterns such as snake-like, ring-shaped, or pearl-like formations are associated with specific humor imbalances. For instance, a snake-like spread indicates Vali predominance, while a ring pattern suggests Azhal disturbance (14).

The test is usually performed early in the morning using fresh urine samples. Environmental conditions such as temperature and surface stability can influence the results, making standardization challenging (15).

Despite its limitations, Neikuri is considered a valuable prognostic tool in Siddha medicine. Recent studies attempt to analyze these patterns using image processing techniques to improve objectivity (16).

Modern Urine Analysis: Overview

Modern urinalysis is a systematic examination of urine involving physical, chemical, and microscopic analysis. It is widely used in clinical practice for diagnosing various diseases, including renal disorders, infections, and metabolic conditions (17).

Physical examination includes assessment of color, clarity, and volume. Changes in these parameters can indicate dehydration, infection, or systemic disease. For example, cloudy urine may suggest infection, while dark urine may indicate liver disorders (18).

Chemical analysis is performed using dipstick tests that detect substances such as glucose, protein, ketones, and pH. These tests provide rapid and reliable results, aiding in early diagnosis (19).

Microscopic examination involves the identification of cells, casts, crystals, and microorganisms. This provides detailed information about renal and urinary tract conditions (20).

Laboratory Techniques in Modern Urinalysis

Dipstick analysis is one of the most commonly used techniques in urinalysis. It involves reagent strips that change color in response to specific chemical constituents. This method is rapid and easy to use (21).

Automated urine analyzers have improved efficiency and accuracy in laboratories. These systems use advanced technologies such as flow cytometry and digital imaging to analyze samples (22).

Chromatographic and spectroscopic techniques are used for detecting drugs, toxins, and metabolic products in urine. These methods provide high sensitivity and specificity (23).

Microbiological culture techniques are used to identify pathogens in urinary tract infections. These tests guide appropriate antibiotic therapy and improve patient outcomes (24).

Comparative Analysis: Siddha Neer Kuri vs Modern Urinalysis

The Siddha system is based on qualitative and holistic assessment, whereas modern urinalysis relies on quantitative and standardized measurements. This fundamental difference influences their diagnostic approaches (25).

Siddha methods are cost-effective and accessible, making them suitable for rural and resource-limited settings. In contrast, modern techniques require laboratory infrastructure and trained personnel (26).

Modern urinalysis provides precise and reproducible results, which are essential for clinical decision-making. Siddha methods, while insightful, lack standardization and may vary between practitioners (27).

Both systems have unique strengths, and their integration could enhance diagnostic accuracy and patient care. Combining traditional knowledge with modern technology offers promising possibilities (28).

Correlation Between Neer Kuri Findings and Modern Parameters

Certain observations in Neer Kuri can be correlated with modern biochemical findings. For example, frothy urine in Siddha may correspond to proteinuria detected in laboratory tests (29).

Similarly, changes in urine color observed in Siddha can be linked to bilirubin or hemoglobin levels in modern analysis. Dark urine may indicate liver dysfunction or hemolysis (30).

Urine quantity observations in Siddha can be correlated with conditions such as polyuria or oliguria in modern medicine. These parameters provide valuable clinical insights (31).

Establishing such correlations can help bridge the gap between traditional and modern diagnostic systems, enhancing their clinical relevance (32).

Clinical Significance and Applications

Urine analysis plays a critical role in the early detection of diseases such as diabetes, kidney disorders, and infections. Both Siddha and modern systems utilize urine as a diagnostic medium (33).

In chronic diseases, regular urine analysis helps in monitoring disease progression and treatment response. This is particularly important in conditions like diabetes and liver disease (34).

Siddha methods offer a non-invasive and cost-effective approach, making them suitable for community-based healthcare. Modern techniques provide detailed and accurate information for clinical management (35).

The integration of both systems can improve diagnostic efficiency and provide holistic patient care (36).

Advantages and Limitations

Siddha urine analysis is simple, cost-effective, and non-invasive. It does not require sophisticated equipment and can be performed easily in clinical settings (37).

However, it is subjective and lacks standardization. Variability in interpretation can affect diagnostic accuracy (38).

Modern urinalysis offers precise, quantitative, and reproducible results. It is widely accepted and standardized across healthcare systems (39).

Its limitations include higher cost, requirement for infrastructure, and dependency on trained personnel (40).

Integration of Traditional and Modern Diagnostics

Integrating Siddha and modern diagnostic approaches can provide a comprehensive understanding of disease. This can enhance early detection and personalized treatment (41).

Scientific validation of Siddha methods is essential for their acceptance in mainstream medicine. Research studies can help establish correlations and improve reliability (42).

Technological advancements such as digital imaging and AI can be used to standardize traditional diagnostic methods like Neikuri (43).

Such integration can improve healthcare accessibility and outcomes, especially in resource-limited settings (44).

Discussion

The comparison between Siddha and modern urine analysis highlights the strengths and limitations of both systems. While Siddha offers holistic insights, modern methods provide precise data (45).

The lack of standardization in Siddha methods remains a major challenge. However, their simplicity and accessibility make them valuable in certain contexts (46).

Modern techniques, though advanced, may not always be accessible in rural areas. This underscores the importance of integrating traditional methods (47).

Future research should focus on validating Siddha techniques and exploring their integration with modern diagnostics (48).

Standardization of Neer Kuri and Neikuri is essential for their clinical application. Developing objective criteria can improve reliability (49).

Large-scale clinical studies are needed to validate traditional diagnostic methods. These studies can provide evidence for their effectiveness (50).

Integration of digital technologies can enhance the accuracy and reproducibility of Siddha diagnostics (51).

The future of diagnostics lies in combining traditional wisdom with modern science for holistic healthcare (52).

Conclusion

Siddha Neer Kuri and modern urine analysis represent two distinct approaches to diagnosis. While Siddha emphasizes qualitative and holistic assessment, modern methods focus on quantitative precision.

Both systems have unique advantages and limitations. Their integration can provide a more comprehensive diagnostic framework.

Further research and standardization are required to enhance the reliability and acceptance of Siddha diagnostic methods.

Overall, combining traditional and modern approaches can improve healthcare outcomes and promote integrative medicine.

Table 1: Comparison of Siddha Neer Kuri and Modern Urinalysis

Parameter	Siddha Neer Kuri	Modern Urinalysis
Approach	Qualitative	Quantitative
Cost	Low	Moderate–High
Equipment	Minimal	Advanced
Accuracy	Subjective	High
Standardization	Limited	Well-established

Table 2: Correlation of Findings

Siddha Observation	Possible Modern Correlation
Frothy urine	Proteinuria
Dark color	Bilirubin/hemoglobin
Increased quantity	Polyuria
Foul odor	Infection

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