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Documentation of general traditional rituals followed during Pillai paruvam (1 day to 21 months) in Palayamkottai area, Tirunelveli district

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Abstract

In Siddha system of medicine, the growth and development and diseases of the children are explained in consonance with different stages (paruvangal). The scientific approach in those days with respect to paruvangal is so common that these stages are mentioned in linguistic literatures like meenakshi ammai pillai tamil etc. The terminologies coined for each stages are so scientific that each one these are correlated exactly with the developmental milestones of the growing infants and children. Also the probable health issues that a child can encounter at each stage are also described. This study was taken to document those traditional knowledge and to support our medicinal system.

Keywords: Siddha system, paruvangal, growing infants and children, medicinal system

Introduction

Paruvam which plays an important role in developing immune system and also the issues and ailments which are common during this age group are also discussed elaborately in Siddha literatures. Besides that In Tamilnadu traditional practices and rituals e.g.; seinei, Jathagam, anjanam, kappu, araignan kayiru, thayathu, kaal kolusu, kaluthu kayiru, ect... are followed more during that age to prevent those illness.

Our literatures classify the paediatric group into 10 paruvams, among those up to 3 months-21 months comes in pillai paruvam. Each and every paruvam is mentioned by the motor activity of a child in response with its chronological age.

-) **Kappu (up to 3 months)** – The child has to be intensely taken care immediately after birth. The child should be protected from the external environment and disease.
-) **Chenkeerai (up to 5 months)** - In this period the child attains head holding.

- J) **Thaalam(up to 7 months)** - In this stage the child can able to recognize his/her mothers vocals by which we can test the child's hearing. The vocals should be in neelambari ragam by which the child is calmed and sleeps peacefully.
- J) **Sappani(up to 9 months)** - is clapping of hands by a child on command.
- J) **Mutham(up to 11 months)** - describes about dispersal of flying kiss by a child on command.
- J) **Varugai (up to 13 months)**- says about movement of a child towards a person on command.
- J) **Ambuli (up to 15 months)** - describes smiles at moon.

These 7 paruvams are common in male and female child. Remaining 3 paruvams are differing in male and female child.

- J) **Chitril (up to 17 months)** - says about construction of sand house by a child.
- J) **Siruparai (up to 19 months)**- explains about usage of small musical drums by a child
- J) **Siru thaer (up to 21 months)** - describes about pulling of a small cart by a children. These 3 pariah are male child
- J) **Ammanai (up to 17 months), neeradal (up to 19 months) and oosal (up to 21 months)** - are a game of a child. These 3 paruvams are female child

Materials and Methods

Study population:

Key informers of traditional rituals during pillaiparuvam in palayamkottai.

Study design:

Descriptive – cross sectional study.

Method of approach:

Direct interview, face to face interview, no intervention.

Sampling procedure:

Convenient sampling

Sample size:

30 individuals.

Study period:

3 months.

Data collection

Information collected:

Information such asseinei, Jathagam, anjanam, kappu, araignankayiru, thayathu, kaalkolusu, kaluthukayiru, ect... was collected from key informers.

Data Collection Procedure:

Data is collected by direct interview from the key informers of palayamkottai.

Data Collected From Literature:

- J) **Cradling A Baby (Thotilil Idudhal)** – Usually the child is cradled on the day of naming ceremony. The cradle is tied slightly over the ground level and is oscillating. So, as to ensure its safety from small insects. Neem leaves are tied to the cradle for its antimicrobial activity. Merry go round and clanker are also tied to the cradle in order to test the vision and hearing of the child respectively. It is believed that iron helps to remove negative vibration.

- J) **Horoscope Prediction (Jadhagam Kanithal)** – The first traditional procedure immediately after child birth is to deduce his/her Jadhagam which is called as JADHAGA KARMA. It is believed that it gives knowledge and strength to the child. Nowadays this practice is reduced compared to old days. Astrologist calculates child's period of life, health etc... Which is used later to depict about their marriage life.
- J) **Naming Ceremony (Peyar Sootudhal)** - The child is named after 11 days or at its end of first year from his/her birth. The name not only gives identity to the child but also health, higher life expectancy and strength. They also name their child after god and their ancestors. Nowadays people name their child according to numerology. A child can able to recognize his/her name by 8th – 9th month.
- J) **Iyampudai Thali** – In order to product the child Vishnu's ornaments such as sanganu, sakkaram, vil, vaal and thandu, collectively called as panjayudham or iympudai thali is worn to the child at the 11th day.
- J) **Araignan** – The practice of araignankayiru at the end of first year is widely noticed. It is believed that, if the child is affected by diseases known as 'kanaisoodu', the silver araignan will change its colour to black. But nowadays some people use gold or some black rope according to their socio economic status.
- J) **Showing To Sun Light And Moon Light** – The child is taken out from the labour room at the end of 12th day it is called as 'NISHKIRAMANAM'. The child is shown in the sun light on the same day of nishkiranamanam or at 3rd month and shown in moon light at 4th month. It is believed that this process improves immunity of the child.
- Some people do oil massage and show the child in sun light. This helps in the production of vitamin D.
- Showing to moon light ensures child's head holding and night vision. Nowadays night blindness due to vitamin A deficiency is prevalent.
- J) **Annaprasanam (Weaning)** – Based on the food consumed by the child the stages growth is classified into 1. Milk feeding stage, 2. Milk and solid food consuming stage, 3. solid foods consuming stage. Even though the first stage is up to 6 months, the child is exclusively breast fed. The process of weaning is done at 5th or 6th month in house or temple.
- WHO also recommends exclusive breast feeding until 6 months.
- In order to celebrate the process of tooth eruption people have a ceremony called 'PALLUKOLUKATTAI' (pudding). This pudding contains rice flour, green gram, coconut flower and sugar or candy. Which has carbohydrates, proteins, fat and serves as a balanced diet of the child?
- J) **Ear Piercing (Karnavedhanam)** – Ear piercing is done at 6th, 7th, or 8th month or at the age of 3-5 years. In olden days it was considered as an identity of the Hindu's but ear piercing increases immunity. Also it stimulates the acupuncture points and believed to prevent cardio vascular and respiratory diseases. Nose piercing in girl children prevents umbilical hernia in her later life.
- J) **Edu Thodakudhal** – This process is done at 3-5 years of age at an auspicious day through an eligible guru. Education is important, in order to lead a healthy life.

வசம்புகாப்பு



தாயத்து



பால்பாசி



தண்ட,கால் கொலுசு



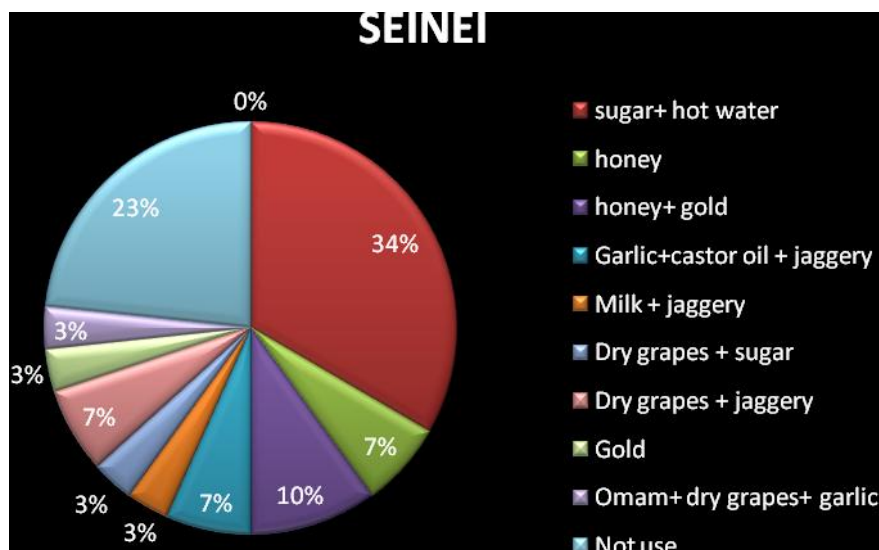
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Results

Seinei:

Seinei	No. Of participants	% of participants
Sugar+ hot water	10	34%
Honey	2	7%
Honey + gold	3	10%
Garlic + castor oil + Jaggery	2	7%
Milk + Jaggery	1	3%
Dry grapes + sugar	1	3%
Dry grapes + Jaggery	2	7%
Gold	1	3%
Omam+ dry grapes+ garlic	1	3%
Not users	7	23%

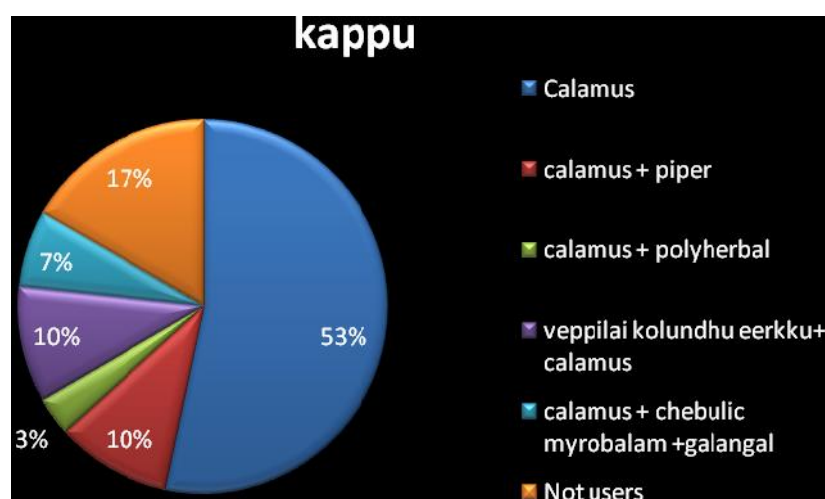


Out of 30 participants – 34% of informers were used in sugar + hot water, 23% of informers were not use in seinei, 7% of informers were used in honey, 7% of informers were used in garlic, castor oil, Jaggery, 10% of informers were used in honey+ gold, 3% of informers were used in

milk+Jaggery, 3%of informers were used in dry grapes+ sugar water, 7% of informers were used in dry grapes+Jaggery water, 3% of informers were used in gold, 3% of informers were used in omam+dry grapes+ garlic.

Kappu:

Kappu	No of participants	% of participants
Calamus	16	53%
calamus + piper	3	10%
calamus + polyherbal	1	3%
Veppilaikolundhueerkku+ calamus	3	10%
calamus + chebulicmyrobalam + galangal	2	7%
Not users	5	17%

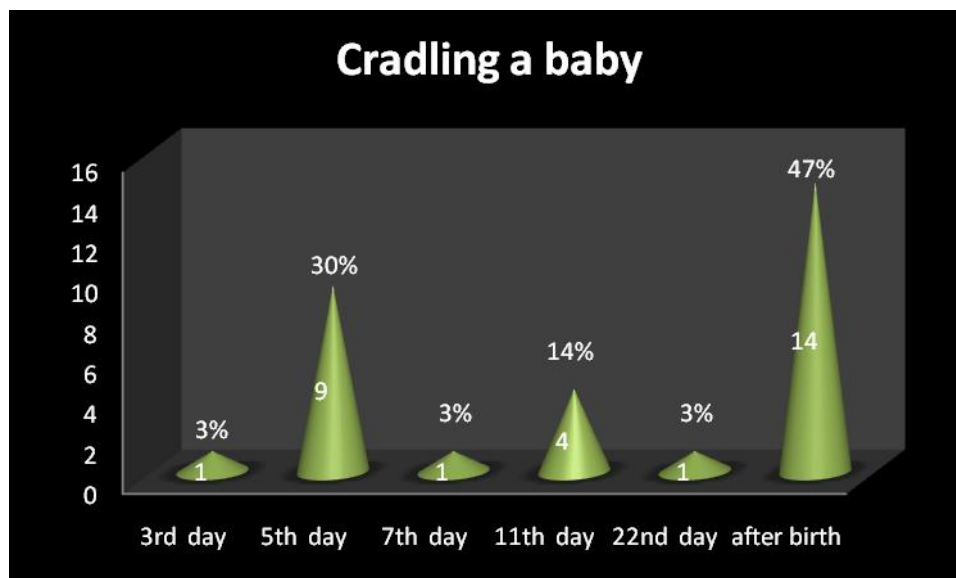


Out of 30 participants – 53% of informers were used in calamus, 10% of informers were used in calamus + piper, 3% of informers were used in calamus + poly herbal, 10% of informers were

used in veppilaikolundhueerkku + calamus, 7% of informers were used in calamus + chebulicmyrobalam + galangal, 17% of informers were not users.

Cradling a baby:

Cradling a baby	No of participants	% of participants
3 rd day	1	3%
5 th day	9	30%
7 th day	1	3%
11 th day	4	14%
22 nd day	1	3%
After Birth	14	47%

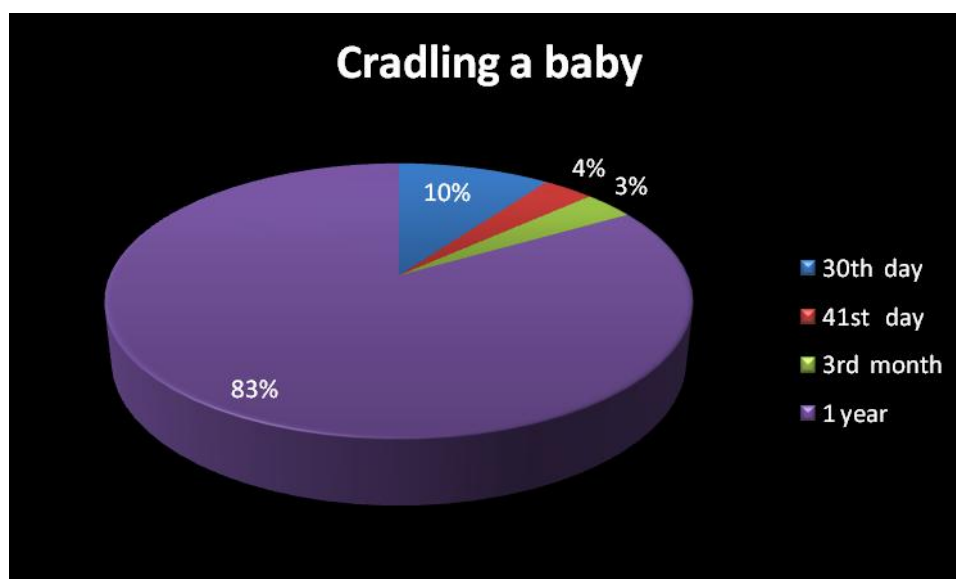


Out of 30 participants – 3% of informers were practicing in 3rd day, 30% of informers were practicing in 5th day, 3% of informers were practicing in 7th day, 14% of informers were

practicing in 11th day, 3% of informers were practicing in 22nd day, 47% of informers were practicing in after birth.

Jadhagam:

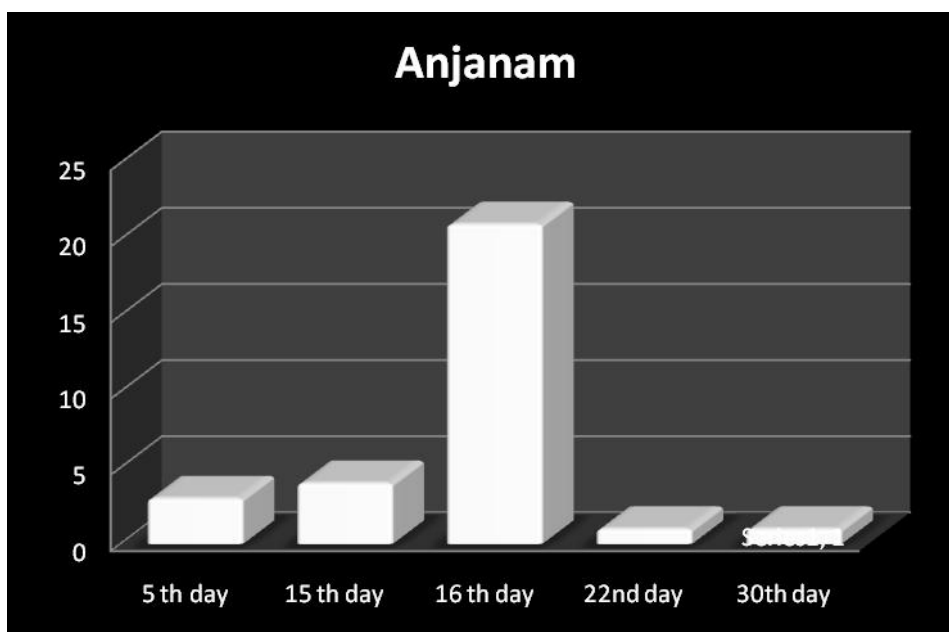
Jadhagam	No of participants	% of participants
30 TH day	3	10%
41 st day	1	4%
3 rd month	1	3%
1 year	25	83%



Out of 30 participants- 10% of informers were practicing in 30th day, 4% of informers were practicing in 41st day, 3% of informers were practicing in 3rd month, and 83% of informers were practicing in 1 year.

Anjanam:

Anjanam	No of participants	% of participants
5 th day	3	10%
15 th day	4	14%
16 th day	21	70%
22 nd day	1	3%
30 th day	1	3%

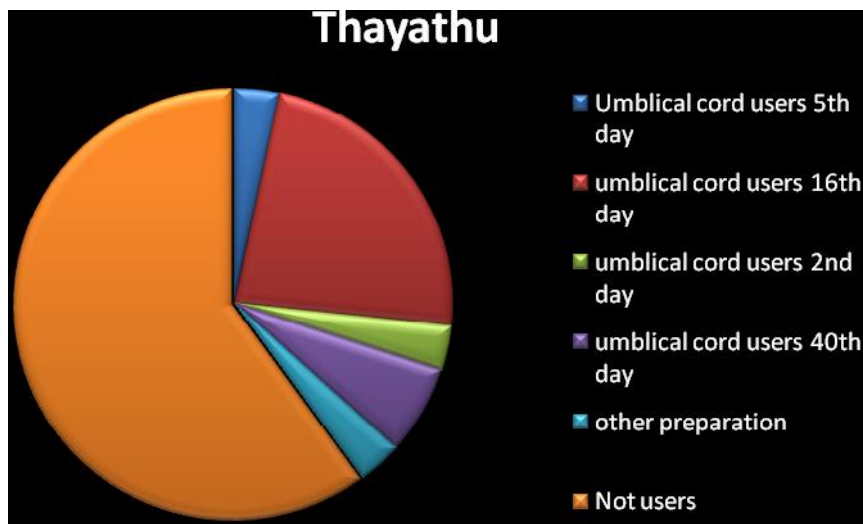


Out of 30 participants- 10% of informers were used in 5th day, 14% of informers were used in 15th day, 70% of informers were used in 16th day,

3 % of informers were used in 22nd day, 3% of informers were used in 30th day.

Thayathu:

Thayathu	No of participants	% of participants
Umbilical cord users 5 th day	1	45%
umbilical cord users 16 th day	7	23%
umbilical cord users 2 nd day	1	3%
umbilical cord users 40 th day	2	7%
other preparation	1	3%
Not users	18	60%



Out of 30 participants – umbilical cord users 4% of informers were used in 5th day, 23% of informers were used in 16th day, 3% of informers were used in 2nd day, 7% of informers were used in 40th day, 3% of informers were used in other preparation and 60% of informers were not users.

Discussion

On the basis of collected data from palayamkottai area, Tirunelveli district.

-) **Kappukattudhal** – Scientifically it is known that the area where the kappu is held stimulates certain points around the area. It increases the natural immunity of Infants. **Vasambu** is the most common herb used because of its known healing effects in gastrointestinal tract ailments towards paediatrics. In Siddha literatures also, it is known as **pillaimarundhu**.
-) **Ear piercing** – Scientifically if the ear lobe is a vital acupuncture point and that piercing it may have a therapeutic value. Which is directly linked to the brain. So, it improves brain activity and vision.
-) **Araignankayiru** – According to them in olden days used araignan to measure the babies weight and to maintain shape of

babies hip. Scientifically, it is proved to prevent hernia. It is also tied to protect baby from negative energy.

-) **Anklets** – Scientific world speaks that the effect of anklets has a large impact. It induces the activity of liver, spleen, gall bladder, kidney, ureter and stomach.
-) **Peyarsootudhal (Naming ceremony)** – most of the people believe that his/her baby name spoke into right ear, name registers in the babies brain and the parents voice pattern is also registered.
-) **Head shaving** – It is believed to rid the baby of negativity from their past life and cleanse the child's body and soul.

Conclusion

Each and every traditional rituals followed by our ancestors have a lot of health benefits behind. As this practices are now diminishing due to adaptation of westernized cultured. If the science behind those practices were received, proved, believed and followed in a more effective way, there is no doubt that we will get a healthier future generation.

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