

USING TRADITIONAL THEATRE TO PROMOTE GENERIC MEDICINES

19th December 2014, at PaPu Bhavan, Vidya Vardhak Sangha, Dharwad, India.

Dr S F Kumbar, President of local Indian Medical Association (IMA), Dharwad was the chief guest and Dr Sanjeev Kulkarni – a practicing gynecologist presided over the function.

Yakshagana is a theater form that combines dance, music, dialogue, costume, make-up, and stage techniques with a unique style and form. This theater style resembles Western opera in its form and is mainly found in the coastal region of Karnataka, India. Yakshagana is traditionally presented from dusk to dawn.

Yakshagana literally means the song (gana) of the yaksha, (nature spirits). Yakshagana is the scholastic name (used for the last 200 years) for art forms. It is believed to have evolved from pre-classical music and theater during the period of the Bhakti movement. It is sometimes simply called “the play” in both Kannada and Tulu.

“JANAPARA SANJEEVINI” – The word Janapara means pro-people. **Sanjeevini** is a mythological magical plant which can wake dead people to the life.

Program

Introduction: Power Point presentation explaining the term Generic Medicines mostly to non-medical people.

First scene:

Dhanapala, the bad man wants to make and accumulate money by any means. His advisor, Durmati, advises different ways to cheat the establishment and make money, for example to be friendly with thieves and amass illegal wealth or to take advantage of forest wealth. Dhanapala feels that these ideas are dangerous and they can end up in prison. He has different ideas. Dhanapala wants to exploit the field of medicine as medicines are essential for well being of human beings. He plans to sell the same medicine by different names (depicting brand names) and at different price, many more times than the original cost. He foresees that this is going to blend with the system and he can prosper.

Second scene:

Dharmasena (a good and benevolent king), has implemented good rules for the well being of his subjects. Now he tours his kingdom with his Minister to see how his subjects are doing.

Third scene:

A patient/ subject, is in lots of pain physically, has lost whatever small wealth he had accumulated by his hard work for treatment of a disease that he is suffering from.

Fourth scene:

The patient/ subject meets the King and narrates his tragic story. He tells that he has been ailing since long. He has consulted the best doctors available. Meanwhile for buying of medicines he has lost whatever wealth he has accumulated. He had to sell away his possessions like a small stretch of

field to buy medicines. Now he is struggling even for a square meal a day. He relates all these sufferings made worse by sky rocketing of medicine prices.

The King discusses the matter with his Minister and seeks his advice. The wise Minister informs the King that sky high price of essential medicines is because of some selfish people who are selling branded medicines at very high price. The Minister also educates the king about “generic medicines” and branded medicines.

At this stage king clears the doubt of the patient/ subject regarding the efficacy of generic medicines. The king says that generic medicines are equally effective though of low cost.

Finally the king declares that all over his kingdom several drug houses be opened and start selling good quality generic medicines at affordable cost.

Cast:

A WOMEN YAKSHAGANA TEAM

Dhanapala	Ms. Shashikala Joshi - bank employee
Durmati	Ms. Shristi Kulkarni – 11 th standard student
Patient	Dr. (Ms) Shubhada C - Microbiology Professor in medical college
King	Ms. Samata – final year dental student
Wise Minister	Ms. Rohini Hoskeri- 9 th standard student

Conceived and trained by Sri Parameshvar Hegade Inabailu, Shivamogga, Karnataka.

SUPPORTED BY:-

- (1) Vidya Vardhak Sangha, Dharwad. Was established in 1890 with the sole objective of promoting Kannada culture and language.
- (2) SAKARA – Women Yakshagana team for culture and dialogue.
- (3) Drug Action Forum – Karnataka (DAF-K) – Independent, registered group campaigning for Rational Drugs Therapy & Policy
- (4) Jagruti, Dharwad – a grass root NGO committed for gender sensitivity.

Thanks to Dr Gopal Dabade