

Lifelines as a Tool to Predict Death

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Abstract

The study of the relative positions of astronomical objects and their movements is called Astrology. It is used as a means for deriving information about terrestrial planets and affairs of humans. The fear of the unknown is the primary reason for the current fascination with horoscopes. The beliefs are different among different cultures and every country has their own belief systems. Some of the beliefs and superstitions of Indians are seen to have been passed on from generation to generation. The Aim of the study is to co-relate the death with life line. Plotting the data against the age for correlation in scattered diagram it was observed that it did not reflect the life span of the individuals. Though people have belief in different aspects of astrology, this study proves that there is no scientific basis to the claims of palmistry.

Key Words: Astrology, Palmistry, Life line, Death

Introduction

In India 50% of the population is below the age of 25 years and the expected average age of an Indian will be 29 years by 2020^[1]. India stands 165th in the life expectancy of the citizens with 69.09 years^[2]. Hence the loss of life would affect the productivity of the state. This study is imminent, as it analyses the lifeline that could be used in predicting the death.

The study of the relative positions of astronomical objects and their movements is called Astrology. It is used as a means for deriving information about terrestrial planets and affairs of humans.^[3] The origin of the word Astrology is from 'Astrologia' which is a Latin word 'that means the account of the stars. Astrology is a language that symbolizes a form of art and 'clairvoyance'. Astrology, all throughout the history of astrology, has been closely related to medicine, astronomy, thaumaturgy and meteorology.^[4] The scientific value of astrology was questioned with the onset of the scientific revolution and

it has been challenged successfully both on theoretical and experimental grounds. Certain studies have shown it not to have any scientific validity.^[5] Thus Astrology is said to have lost its academic and conceptual standing, and the belief in it of people has seen a decline.^[6]

The fear of the unknown is the primary reason for the current fascination with horoscopes. Some of the beliefs and superstitions of Indian are seen to have been passed on from generation to generation. The faith in Astrology stems from the objective that predictions given will help to protect them from evil spirits.^[7]

Astrology is an integral part of Indian culture. In today's time also, people prefer to start auspicious things such as taking the first step into a newly made home (Gruhapravesha), buying a new vehicle, its number, getting a marriage proposal fixed, selecting a marriage date, to begin a new business etc, according to their beliefs in astrology. Superstitions are seen not only in India, but it is present all over the world. The beliefs are different among different cultures and every country has their own belief systems. Though some believe these superstitions and follow them blindly, there are others, who do not believe in them and just ignore them.^[7]

Palmistry is believed to have been originated from India, is more than 3000 years old. It includes studying

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various aspects of the hand of an individual such as the shape and size of the hand, configurations and contours of the palm, finger shape, size and also features of the fingernails. It is said that at least a hundred signs or marks are there that could help predict qualities, events or supposed relations. The basic assumption is that every minute detail of the hand has information that could help predict the individual's present or future.^[8]

The closest relationship that palmistry bears to science as conceived by many is the branch of dermatoglyphics, defined as the study of fingerprints. It has helped discover genetic correlation between particular patterns of fingerprint and certain human diseases.

Palmistry is said to have some branches such as

1) "Medical" palmistry, states that there is an association between the hand pattern and the emotional or physical states of the individuals.

2) "Psychotherapeutic palmistry" associates the hands, character, and personality giving the positive and negative aspects of the individual.

The lines of the palms are divided in two categories – the major lines and the minor lines. There are a minimum of 14 major lines that include the lifeline, head line, heart line, and lines of marriage, children, intuition, fortune, fate, intuition and spirituality. The lines are also studied in terms of their size, shape, length, so on and so forth. The lifeline is a line that indicates the constitution and physical well-being of the individual. In general it gives the vitality of the individual while its length indicates natural life expectancy^[9]

Aim of the Study

1. To measure the length of the life line in both hands of those who died
2. To co-relate the death with life line (palmistry)

Materials and Method

This cross-sectional study was undertaken between April 2017 and September 2018 at the Department of Forensic Medicine & Toxicology, SRMC & RI, and Chennai. Socio demographic and other data was collected from the deceased relatives, friends and Police/Investigating officer who were present during the autopsy of the deceased using standardized proforma

developed for the purpose.

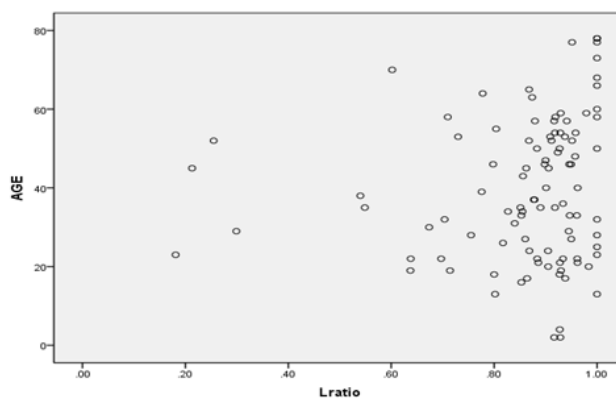
The lifeline was correlated with the age at time of death (longevity) obtained from the inquest report /FIR

Lifeline length was measured by a single observer in 100 cases brought to the Department of Forensic Medicine for autopsy. The lifeline lengths in both hands were measured by laying a stretched piece of thread or string along the line and then measuring its length using a ruler.

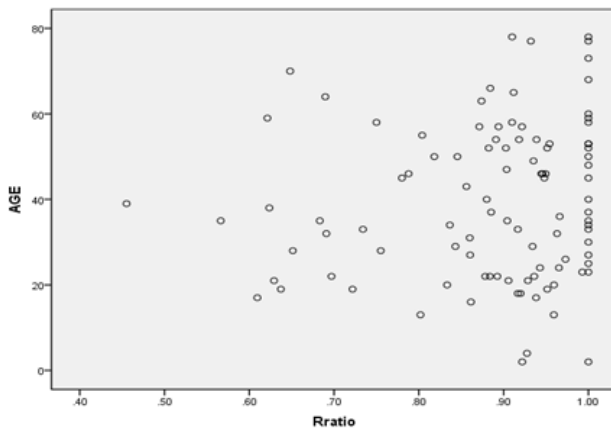
Cheiro was probably the first man to identify palmistry as seen in his work 'Undisputed Doyen of Palmistry'. From his work on lifeline it is understood that it runs from a place at the meeting point of the radial end of the hand and distal end point of lifeline to the junction of proximal end of lifeline and palmar crease. This maximum lifeline length called the maximum potential lifeline was also measured as a control to account for the difference in hand sizes. The corrected life line ratio was thus calculated as the ratio of actual lifeline length to its potential maximum.

Results

In the theory of palmistry the length of life line in hand refers to longevity of a person. The life line extends from the corner of the palm above the thumb and travels towards the wrist in an arc. This lifeline in both hands were measured in all ages and compared with the actual life span of the deceased. The length of the lifeline in the left hand divided by the maximum length of left hand gave the left hand ratio. Plotting the data against the age for correlation in scattered diagram it was observed that it did not reflect the life span of the individuals. In the similar manner the right hand was analysed, which showed similar results.



Left hand life line ratio: Chart- 1



Right hand life line ratio: Chart – 2

Discussion

From the time, Palmistry has been quoted in Indian and Chinese manuscripts, some 3000 years ago; the scientific validity of it has always been questioned. It gained peak popularity with intensive work done by society palmist Louis Hamon, known by his false name of Cheiro.^[10]

Theoretically the length of life line in hand is related with the longevity of an individual in palmistry. The length of the life line is measured in both hands and it is compared with the actual life span of the deceased. The length of the lifeline in the left hand divided by the maximum length of left hand gave the left hand ratio. Plotting the data against the age for correlation in scattered diagram it was observed. In the similar manner the right hand was analyzed, in many cases which were studied had the same life line ratio but were of different ages and it was seen that left hand life line ratio and right hand life line ratio individually also had no correlation with longevity of a person.

This is contradicting the observations made by P G Newrick et al in their study which states that a strong statistical correlation exists between the life line length and the age up to which a person lived. This was particularly true for the correlation of the age at death and the right hand lifeline length.^[11]

Conclusion

Though people have belief in different aspects of astrology, this study proves that there is no scientific basis to the claims of palmistry.

In palmistry aspect the lifeline ratio of the subjects was found to have no correlation with the longevity of a person. This clearly disproves the claims in the palmistry.

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