

INTRODUCTION TO THE GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH AS IN AYURVEDA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CARAKA SAMHITA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the Indian health science rather than a mere therapeutic science. Ayurveda has its own philosophical point of view. The philosophy coined for Ayurveda is unique. Ayurveda has both mundane and spiritual plane in explaining its basic principles. The concept of mutual relation between the macrocosm and microcosm as per Ayurveda with special reference to Caraka Samhita is a valid scientific data pool. It is providing practical solutions to the present day environmental ill-health happening across the globe. Details are there in the full paper.

KEYWORDS

Ayurveda, Indian Health Science, Indian Medical Science, Natural calamities, Indian Philosophy, pandemic, Environmental health, Caraka Samhita, Janapadodhwamsa, desa, Kaala, Global village

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda the Indian system of medicine has its own philosophy and methods to deal with life. It may not be always substantial with modern scientific parameters. But the whole system of Ayurveda works on time tested principles.

Those who are not familiar with Ayurveda may argue that these principles are blind belief than scientific. But when we deal with Ayurveda in depth and when it is been transliterated, translated, commented and researched in most appropriate way it would be revealed that the age-old medical wisdom of India has innumerable hidden treasures in it. Many of the chapters are yet to be unraveled in

its every aspect. Many portions have missed commentaries; many commentaries are vague and yet to be explored.

Caraka's outlook towards the Universe, its origin, environment, elements of Universe, its components and single units, its complex permutations, sustenance, destruction, relation of this outer world with the inner worlds of the living beings, symbiosis, balancing, homeostasis between the two and how the trouble happened to one end affects the other or in a more precise clinical observation the inter-relation of living creatures and nature is reflecting in enumerating the etiological factors and eliciting the therapeutics.

Many of the references from Caraka Samhita are astonishing when we come across exactly similar situations in present-day life. It is high time to read Caraka Samhita with the systematic background of Sanskrit in one hand and the scientific interpretation of therapeutics on the other hand.

Hence the hypothesis is created to analyze the effect of global environmental health on living beings and vice versa.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are two major triplets in Ayurvedic literature. They are *brhatrayam* and *laghutrayam*. Caraka Samhita, Susruta Samhita and Ashtaanga hridaya constitute the *brhatrayam*. Caraka Samhita has penned by Agnivesa and redacted by Caraka and Drdhabala. The era of scribing Caraka Samhita is calculated with available evidences as first century of the Common Era. Caraka Samhita comprises of 120 chapters. There are a number of commentaries for Caraka Samhita. Commentaries are available in Sanskrit, Hindi, English and vernacular languages. Among the available commentaries Ayurveda Deepika commentary by Cakrapaani Dutta is almost complete and authentic.

Ayurveda consider each individual as microcosm (*pindaandam*) and this whole universe as macrocosm (*brahmaandam*). Every microcosm is complete by itself and is a whole miniature of the macrocosm i.e., the universe. '*yaavanto loke moortimantah-taavantah purushah*'. As per Caraka Samhita *loka* the nature or Universe is similar to *purusha* the individual in its structure and function.

STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

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- To study in detail about the influence of environmental factors on living beings especially humans

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- To study in detail about the influence of life style, culture of living and food habits of living creatures especially of humans on environmental health
 - To compare the effects imbalance of environmental factors and its impact explained in Caraka Samhita with present day reality
 - To trace out the universal outlook of Ayurveda regarding environmental health and its present-day relevance
 - To study the linguistics adopted in Caraka Samhita as well as in Ayurveda Deepika commentary of Caraka Samhita for the references related to environmental health

METHODOLOGY

For the literary research work Caraka Samhita and its commentary Ayurveda Deepika by Cakrapaani are taken into account. It will be interpreted with the help of Sanskrit linguistics. Sorting out relevant references from the treatise as well as commentary will be doing with first priority. The textual references will be contextually interpreted. The commentary part will be taken into account and will try to understand the intention of commentator in each context by thoroughly analyzing the clinical edge of the context and the language used. Then the clinical significance of those references will be highlighted. As the literary research is intended to find out the environmental health aspects explained in Caraka Samhita, each reference found out by the researcher in this aspect will be critically evaluated with relevant cross references from other Ayurvedic treatises of different era, especially from Susruta Samhita, Ashtaamga hrdaya as well as Ashtaamga samgraha. At the same time cross references from Indian classical literatures like Vedas, Upanishads, kaavyaas etc. may also be taken into account at times if the researcher is convinced with its relevance in this study. During this part of research, the findings will be recorded both in Sanskrit as well as English.

The available data and evidences will be collected and observed thoroughly regarding the past incidences of natural calamities, avalanche and environmental pollutions etc. in various parts of the world in different periods. The effects of such destructions on health of individual as well as society will also be thoroughly studied. The natural adaptation of different living beings during such calamities will also be studied. The extinction of species, if happened as a part of such natural disaster will also be taken for observation. Emergence of new species or mutations in existing species will also take under the purview of this study.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Among Ayurveda scientists Caraka Samhita is renowned for its vast and unique philosophical contemplation. The reflection of philosophical approach can be seen even in the etiologies, pathogenesis, and therapeutics descriptions of diseases. Caraka Samhita is famous for its way of description of treatment aspects of diseases. When we go in depth, it seems that Caraka Samhita is a clinically oriented treatise. Many Ayurveda researchers opined that the etiologies and therapeutics are ascribed as if Caraka is reporting the diseases which he might have come across. The style of narration shows that Caraka might be a well-practiced physician of that time.

The outbreak of pandemics, its causative factors, disease causing microbes and its natural evolution etc. and its relation with environmental health and imbalance are also mentioned in Ayurveda. The impact or influence of life on earth on environmental health, especially the impact of human life is thoroughly observed. It includes basic lifestyle of the human beings in different topographical areas and the adopted life styles, especially of two groups i.e., the migrants and the natives. The food habits as well as the life styles adopted by migrants in their new niche and the food and life style adopted by natives. For example, the concept of *paadaamsika krama* in Caraka Samhita.

Food habits and daily regimens are intended to be based on regional topography as per the preventive aspects explained in Caraka Samhita. But due to social and cultural advancements in the human life in last few centuries for example the concept of 'global village' has been influenced the lifestyle of man. Special mention is required regarding the change of food habits when it comes to the purview of etiology-pathogenesis tracing of the patients by an Ayurveda physician.

Significance of understanding Region and Time

During patient examination (*rogee pareeksha*) or disease analysis (*Roga pareeksha*) Ayurveda repeatedly emphasis the relevance of understanding two variables – they are region (*desa*) and time (*kaala*). The explanation of both these variable in different treatises warrants special mention. Very beautiful blending of philosophy, physiology, geology, environmental science, Indian astrology, etiopathology, sociology etc. can be perceived in these portions. Linguistically, the two variables are used together in majority of the references as *dvivacana*, i.e., '*desa-kaalau*'. In contexts like *Dasa-vidha pareeksha* these two variables are included.

Region (*desa*)

As per textual references the term 'region' may refers to both geographical region (*bhoomi-desa*) and anatomic region (*deha-desa*).

Geographical region

Geographical region is considered in the purview of a disease-diseased analysis (*roga-rogee pareeksha*) to get clarity in the characteristic features as follows:

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- Ø the region in which a particular individual has born and brought up
 - Ø In case of any migration, difference between the characteristics in both regions
 - Ø Natural flora and fauna of the region
 - Ø How the features of a region influence the internal homoeostasis of a living being?
 - Ø Dosha predominance of a particular region based on the characters of soil, vegetation and animals naturally seen in that area

There are vatadosha predominant geographic region (*Jaangala desa*), kapha dosha predominant region (*Anoopa desa*), Tridosha equal dominance region (*saadhaarana desa*). Living beings born to these regions have an innate instinct to follow the dosha predominance in their *janma-prakrti* also. The knowledge of characteristic features of *janma desa* of patients will help an Ayurveda physician to make a more precise *prakrti* assessment.

Anatomical region (*Deha-desa*)

The classification and identification of different anatomical regions in a living individual is based on various parameters like six-parts classification (*shadanga-vibhajana*), anatomy of vital points (*marma saareera*), organ-organelles (*anga-pratyanga*) etc. This helps to diagnose and decide treatments more precisely.

Time (*Kaala*)

Time refers to both clock time (*kshanaadi*) and condition of the disease (*vyaadhy-avastha*). This helps in a clearer sketching of the health condition of the individual and more effective therapeutic administration.

Analysis of these parameters requires technical knowledge in different sciences both traditional and contemporary. Jyotisha, Vaastu-saashtra, Saamudrika saashtra, Marma-saashtra, Veda-ganita, etc. are examples for complementing traditional Indian scientific heritage whereas contemporary sciences like Astronomy, Geography, Oceanography, Aquatics, Geology, Topography, etc. are also contributing.

When comes to the applied aspect of these kinds of knowledge Ayurveda can offer wonderful suggestions for the protection of health of the healthy and cure of the disease of the diseased globally.

FINDING AND CONCLUSIONS

It is true from the prima facie study about the influence between macrocosm and microcosm from the available Indian scientific literature that the relevance of Indian health science is valid till date. It is the real need of the era to carry on such studies not only at the level of literary research or mere observational study but at applied level with updated technical support. The search for more sustainable, bio-friendly and holistic solutions for calamities affecting larger populations is a global phenomenon. Indian scientific heritage has the back up to support the process, provide solutions and reinstate a bio-physical, bio-chemical, bio-social balance across the globe.

CITATIONS

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