



Review Article

CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF *CHARAKOKTA PRADNYAPARADHA* (INTELLECTUAL ERROR) AND ITS SIGNIFICANCE IN *SHARIRA KRIYA* (PHYSIOLOGY)

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ABSTRACT

*Atma, Mana, Indriya* and *Indriyārtha* are involved in perception of knowledge. One of the three important causative factors of diseases is *Pradnyaparadha* i.e., *Dhi-Dhriti-Smriti Vibhramsha* (intellectual error). *Pradnyaparadha* is the main causative factor of many *Nija* (innate) diseases and all *Agantu* (accidental) diseases as well as *Janapadodhvansa vyadhi* (Epidemic diseases). **Rationale:** It becomes need of an hour to study the concept of *Pradnyaparadha* (intellectual error), one of the major causes of physical and mental diseases, in various dimensions. **Objective:** This is an attempt to study the concept of *Pradnyaparadha* as explained in *Charaka Samhita* and its significance in *Sharira Kriya* which gives a detailed account of *Atma, Mana* and *Indriya*. **Results:** The concept of *Pradnyaparadha* has been discussed at various places in *Charaka Samhita*. If one can avoid this intellectual error by following code of conduct as prescribed in Ayurveda and in various philosophical treatises, he or she will remain healthy and thus will be capable in achievement of goals of life. **Conclusion:** Wrongly perception of knowledge through combined effects of *Atma, Mana, Indriya* and *Indriyārtha* is nothing but *Pradnyaparadha*. Avoidance of etiological factor i.e., avoidance of *Pradnyaparadha* (Intellectual error- Doing improper things knowingly) is the only preventive and curative measure for most of the diseases.

**KEYWORDS:** *Pradnyaparadha, Sharira Kriya, Physiology Intellectual error.*

INTRODUCTION

According to *Charaka Samhita*, Ayurveda depicts the concept of *Purushārtha-Chatushtya* (four goals of life) as the purpose of life; i.e. *Dharma* (virtue), *Artha* (wealth), *Kama* (desire) and *Moksha* (liberation). It emphasizes that healthy long life i.e. longevity is an essential pre-requisite for achieving these *Purushārthas*. These goals of life can be achieved with healthy life. The diseases create hurdles in maintenance of health and thus achieving goals of life.<sup>[1]</sup>

The aims of Ayurveda are maintenance of health of a healthy individual and treatment of a disease in patients.<sup>[2]</sup> Ayurveda, being medical science, focuses on treatment of various physical and mental disorders. The prime intention of a physician is to search for causative factors of a disease for proper treatment.

Charakacharya has given three important causative factors of diseases as:

1. *Pradnyaparadha* i.e., *Dhi-Dhriti-Smriti Vibhramsha* (intellectual error).
2. *Parinama* (Consequences relating to time and past deeds).

3. *Asatmyendriyārtha Samyoga* (Unwholesome contact with the objects of senses).<sup>[3]</sup>

Out of these, *Pradnyaparadha* i.e., *Dhi-Dhriti-Smriti Vibhramsha* (impairment of intellect, patience and memory) is the main cause of many *Nija* (Innate) diseases and all *Agantu* (accidental) diseases.<sup>[4,5]</sup> It is also considered to be the major cause of *Manasa* (mental) and *Janapadodhvansa vyadhi* (Epidemic diseases).<sup>[6]</sup>

Ayurveda, being chiefly a medical science, amalgamates so much philosophy, leaving an impression that philosophy forms as much an important part of Ayurveda as health and longevity are. It is being said, 'Prevention is better than cure'. In modern era or in the era of environmental as well as ethical pollution, when human beings are in great search of preventive measures for diseases or miseries. It becomes need of an hour to study the concepts of *Pradnyaparadha* (intellectual error), one of the major causes of physical and mental diseases, in various dimensions.

So, this is an attempt to study concept of *Pradnyaparadha* as explained in *Charaka Samhita* in

also its significance in *Sharir Kriya* which gives detailed account of *Atma*, *Mana* and *Indriya*.

### Conceptual Study

The term 'Ayurveda' consists of two words 'Ayu' and 'Veda'. The word 'Veda' means knowledge and 'Ayu' means life. Thus Ayurveda is the science of life. The definition of 'Ayu' as given by Charakacharya is, *Ayu* or life is considered as the combination of *Sharira* (body), *Indriya* (sense organs), *Satva* (mind) and *Atma* (soul).<sup>[7]</sup>

For better understanding of the concept 'Ayu' and its components, the analogy of Chariot is given in *Kathopanishad*, one of the principal *Upanishads*, which is as follows: The *Atman* (soul) is considered as the lord of the Chariot, the body as the chariot; the intellect as the charioteer and the mind as the reins.<sup>[8]</sup> The *Jivatman* (the individual soul), who enjoys fruit of *Karma* is bound in this world due to *Avidya*, ignorance, to be the lord of the chariot.

According to *Charaka Samhita*, the three mandatory things (*Triskandha*) which are quite essential to know about treatment of any disease:

- a) *Hetu* (Aetiological factors for diseases)
- b) *Linga* (Signs and symptoms of diseases)
- c) *Aushadha* (Treatment of diseases)<sup>[9]</sup>

In equilibrium of *Dosha - Dhatu - Mala* is known as *Vikara* or disease which is also called as *Dukkha* or Misery.<sup>[10]</sup> The desire forms the root cause of all miseries or diseases. Elimination of desires leads to the eradication of all miseries. Absolute eradication of miseries is nothing but salvation. This stage can be attained only by virtue of the elimination of desires.<sup>[11]</sup>

According to *Charaka Samhita*, the causes of all miseries are:

Impairment of intellect, patience and memory; consequences relating to time and past deeds and unwholesome contact with the objects of senses are considered to be the causative factors for miseries or diseases.<sup>[12]</sup>

Out of these, *Dhi - Dhriti - Smriti - Vibhramsha* i.e., impairment of intellect, patience and memory is known as *Pradnyaparadha*.<sup>[13]</sup>

- a) *Dhi-Vibhramsha*: If something that is eternal is viewed as something that is short-lived and useful as harmful, it is indicative of the impairment of intellect. The normal views the things as they are and hence deviation of intellect from normal is impaired.<sup>[14]</sup>
- b) *Dhriti Vibhramsha*: It is the patience which helps the mind to keep away from harmful, worldly objects. A mind indulging in worldly pleasure cannot be kept away from harmful objects.<sup>[15]</sup>

- c) *Smriti Vibhramsha*: Memory refers to everything that is memorable. When mind is overcome by *Rajas* and *Tamas*, memory gets impaired.<sup>[16]</sup>

Any person whose intellect, memory and patience are impaired, he will subject himself in performing harmful actions which is known as *Pradnyaparadha*. It is the cause of aggravation of all *Sharira* (physical) and *Manasa* (mental) *Doshas*.

Forceful stimulation of natural urges and suppression of the manifested ones, exhibition of undue strength, over indulgence in sexual act, negligence of the time of treatment, initiation of action in improper time, loss of modesty and good conduct, disrespect for respectable ones, enjoyment of harmful objects and similar bad actions arising out of intellectual error lead to the causation of various ailments. Intellectual pseudo-conception and improper conduct is nothing else but Intellectual error or *Pradnyaparadha*. *Pradnyaparadha* falls under the purview of the mind, because the intellect is a direct product of mind and the conduct originates from the former.<sup>[17]</sup>

According to Charakacharya, all *Agantuja Vyadhi* (Exogenous diseases) are the results of *Pradnyaparadha* i.e., due to intellectual error mental disorders are also caused due to *Pradnyaparadha*.<sup>[18,19]</sup> Due to intellectual error (*Pradnyaparadha*), the ignorant indulges in unwholesome perception of senses, suppression of natural urges, exposure to strain beyond their capacity and adoption of such of the regime as are pleasing only temporarily.<sup>[20]</sup>

While explaining the reasons for pollution of water, air, land and time, leading to epidemics-Charakacharya says: Sins of the present life or the misdeeds of the last life are the root of the vitiation of all these factors, viz. air, water, locality, time etc. Intellectual error (*Pradnyaparadha*) constitutes the origin of both the types of sins.<sup>[21]</sup>

Thus, intellectual error (*Pradnyaparadha*) is mentioned as the cause of innate and exogenous diseases, mental disorders and epidemics too. Maintenance of healthy life by following code of conduct is called *Swasthavritta*. This is the science of self-care that teaches us to live healthy and happy till death.

Sushrutacharya has given the elaborative definition of 'Swastha' as: Health of a person means physical and mental health. Balance in *Dosha*, *Dhatu* and *Mala*; good digestive fire, positive and happy attitude in senses, mind and soul indicates the healthy condition of any human being.<sup>[22]</sup>

Ayu is four dimensional depicted as *Sukhayu* (happy life), *Dukkhayu* (unhappy life), *Hitayu* (life)

and *Ahitayu* (life) depicting broadly the 'Individual' and 'Social' dimensions.<sup>[23]</sup>

In Ayurveda, the first line of treatment of any disease is avoidance of causative factors.<sup>[24]</sup> In the same manner, Charakacharya says that preventive measures of all exogenous diseases is by taking recourse to the avoidance of intellectual error.<sup>[25]</sup> As Charakacharya further says, all the psychosomatic activities of human beings are directed towards the aim of achieving happiness. A wise man follows the proper path. An ignorant one goes away from right direction.<sup>[26]</sup>

## DISCUSSION

In the present era, people suffer from various life-style disorders due to improper dietary habits, lack of exercise, suppression of natural urges and stressful conditions. Human cannot discriminate between good and bad things in most of the situations. Ethical values are getting deteriorated in the society. Inter-personal relationships and human-nature bonding have got disturbed nowadays.

The main reason behind all these things is Intellectual error (*Pradnyaparadha*) of human beings in the society. Intellectual error gives rise to various disorders and thus deviate human beings from physical, mental, social as well as spiritual well-being. This unhealthy condition creates hurdles in achieving four goals of life *Dharma* (virtue), *Artha* (wealth), *Kama* (desire) and *Moksha* (liberation).

As it is said, 'Prevention is better than cure', if one can avoid this intellectual error by following code of conduct as prescribed in Ayurveda and in various philosophical treatise, he or she will remain healthy and thus will be capable in achievement of goals of life. Ayurveda, being medical science, guides us for maintenance of health, cure from various diseases and thus proceeding towards salvation, ultimate goal of life.

## CONCLUSION

*Atma*, *Mana*, *Indriya* and *Indriyartha* are involved in perception of knowledge. Wrongly perception of knowledge is nothing but *Pradnyaparadha*. *Pradnyaparadha* is one of the major causative factors of *Nija* (Innate), *Agantu* (Exogenous), *Manasika* (Mental) and *Janapadodhwansa* (Epidemic) diseases. The principal *Upanishad- Kathopanishad* explains the functioning of human body in normal state with the analogy of Chariot and its components. Avoidance of etiological factor i.e., Avoidance of *Pradnyaparadha* (Intellectual error-Doing improper things knowingly) is the only preventive and curative measure for most of the diseases.

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