CONCEPTUAL STUDY OF THE HOLISTIC HEALTH EFFECTS OF RAKTAMOKSHAN (SIRAVEDHA) KARMA IN VICHARCHIKA

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ABSTRACT

Vicharchika (eczema) is one of the Rakta Pradoshaj Vikara commonly observed in society having the symptoms of Rukshata, Twakvaivarnyata, Pidaka and Ruja. It is Tridoshaj Vriddhi but mainly Kapha and Vata Dosha are vitiated. Preserving the health is one of the main endeavors of Ayurveda. Raktamokshana (Bloodletting) (siravedha) is one of the Panchakarma therapy, is the choice of the treatment in all the Rakta Pradoshaj Vikaras like Kushtha, Visarp, Vicharchika. As Rakta is among the Sapta Dhatu gets vitiated by the continuous use of the etiological factors like Apathya Aahar Vihar, sedentary life style and ignorance of Rutucharya. After Siravedha, vitiated Dosha and Rakta were removed from body, there is relief from Vicharchika takes place. Vicharchika is correlated to certain extent with eczema which is one among the common chronic skin disease and its epidemiological studies by WHO reveals that it affects 10-20% of the total world’s population. About 30% of all the skin diseases are eczematous. Although Panchakarma procedures are much researched upon, the effects reported are mainly on Sharir level. Apart from the effects on disease pathology, the procedures are known to demonstrate effects on Manas Bhav (subtle changes) Hence, in present study consist of to evaluate holistic effects of Raktamokshana procedure by assessing its effects on Manas Bhav.

Keywords: Raktamokshan, Siravedha, Vicharchika, Manas Bhav.

INTRODUCTION

In Ayurveda, almost all skin disease can be taken under generalized term “Kushtha”. Kushtha is divided in to Maha and Ksudra Kushtha¹ by almost all the Acharyas. Vicharchika² being the Kshudra Kush-
Vicharchika is considered as Kapha Pradhan and Pitta Pradhana by Acharya Charaka and Sushruta respectively. According to Acharya Charaka and Vagbhatt Kandu, Piddika and Bahu stratva are the symptoms present in Vicharchika (Ch.Ch. 7/26). Means the skin ailment where eruption over the skin appears with dark pigmentation, itching with profuse discharge from the lesion.

Prevalence –
Vicharchika is correlated to certain extent with eczema which is one among the common chronic skin disease and its epidemiological studies by WHO reveals that it affects 10-20% of the total world’s population. About 30% of all the skin diseases are eczematous. Normally 15-30% patients coming to general partition are having dermatological disorders.

Panchakarma, the five procedures namely Vamana, Virechana, Basti, Nasya and Raktamokshana restore balance of body through Shodhana (cleansing) effect. Of these, Raktamokshana is useful for the diseases caused due to Rakta dushti. As Vicharchika is one of the Raktapradoshaj Vikar, Raktamokshan (Siravedha) will find to be effective to reduce the symptoms of Vicharchika.

Siravedha procedures are complex and holistic in nature, have also been described to show effects on Manas Bhav. They exert multidimensional effects. Apart from the effects on disease pathology (gross changes manifested on Sharir), the procedures are known to demonstrate effects on Manas Bhav (subtle changes). Although Panchakarma procedures are much researched upon, the effects reported are mainly on sharir level. The present study evaluates the conceptual holistic effects of Raktamokshan procedure by assessing its effects on Manas Bhav.

Skin is the vital organ of human body. Sparshendriya is situated in skin which gives the knowledge of touch (sparsha). Indeed, Research has shown that people with skin disease experience higher levels of psychological and social distress. Research into the manifestation of psychocutaneous disorder has led to an increasing awareness of the psychosocial effects associated with skin disease. These include depression, a decreased sense of body image, sexual and relationship difficulties and general reduction in quality of life.

Types and Symptoms of Vicharchika (Eczema)
There are several types of eczemas. In Ayurveda, all the three doshas can lead to eczema. The symptoms of the different eczemas are:-

**Vata dosha type**: When the vitiation of the Vata dosha produces the eczema, it is felt in the dryness of the skin. There is pain and severe itching of the affected region.

**Pitta dosha type**: Pitta dosha vitiation can cause oozing from the affected part. There are other symptoms shown such as burning and fever.

**Kapha dosha type**: When there is an imbalance of the Kapha, it is more observable on
the skin. The skin becomes thick and is accompanied by oozing and itching.

AIM
To study the holistic effects of the Raktamokshana Karma (Siravedha) in the Vicharchika Vyadhi.

OBJECTIVES
1. To study about Vicharchika Vyadhi and Raktamokshan (Siravedha) procedure.
2. To study about the holistic effects of Raktamokshan Karma (Siravedha) in Vicharchika Vyadhi.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:
The effects of Raktmokshna procedure on Mana and Indriya are extracted from the following texts: Charak Samhita, Sushrut Samhita, Ashtang Hriday, Sharangdhar Samhita, Dalhan commentary, Bhela Samhita. The information about the concept of siravedha karma in Vicharchika vyadhi is mentioned in Ayurvedic samhita.

Previous Work Done:
There are such type of work has been taken place-

MATERIALS-
1. Review of Vicharchika and Raktamokshan therapy was studied from Charak Samhita, Sushrut Samhita, Ashtang Hriday, Dalhan commentary, Bhela Samhita and various textbooks.
2. Review of Holistic health effects of Shodhan was studied from the paper which was published in Harvard Medical School Boston on Ayurveda and Panchakarma by Conboy L.A Edshten I. Garivaltis H.

METHODS
1. Nidana, Purvarupa, Rupa of Vicharchika Vyadhi was studied.
2. Raktamokshan (Siravedha) Vyadhi was studied.
3. Properties and Karmukata of Siravedha in Vicharchika was studied.
4. Collection of all the references was done and correlation between the data was done logically i.e. by using Yukti Pramana (logical inferences).

OBSERVATIONS
Literary search observations
In Literary Review we observed following observations:
Nidana & Samprapti of Vicharchika:
Nidana
Specific Nidanas for each variety of Kushta are not described in Ayurvedic classics. As Vicharchika is one among the types of Kushta, the Samanya Nidanas de-
scribed in the context of *Kushta* can be taken for *Vicharchika* also.
So *Nidan* for *Vicharchika* can be summarized below –
*Amla, Lavan, Guru Ahar* which is the *Hetus* does the vitiation of *Pitta Dosha* and *Rakta Dhatu* and also it is *Raktadushti Karak*. So, if *Dadhi* which is *Abhishyand* is taken in excess leads to vitiation of *Rakta*, *pitta* and leading to *Vicharchika vyadhi*.

**SAMPRAPTI**

In all the text of *Ayurveda* there is no separate description regarding the *samprapti* of *Vicharchika*, hence *samprapti* mentioned for *kushta* to be considered here also.

**SAMPRAPTI OF VICARCIKA**\(^{15,16}\)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nidana Sevana</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Dosha vruddhi</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pitta Prakop, Kapha Prakopa, Vata Prakopa</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Agnimandya</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>A mavisha</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Rasen Saha Mishribhuya</em></td>
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<tr>
<td><em>Vaigunya -- Dhatu shithila</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Prasara – Tiryak Sira gaman (Tvak, Rakta, Mamsa, Lasika)</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Sthanasamsharya – Bahya Roga Marga</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Dosha – Dushya Sammurchhana</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Srotodusti – Rasavaha, Raktavaha, Mansavaha</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Tvagadeen Dushya dushti</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Vicharchika Lakshana</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In *samhitas*, Aacharyas stated regarding the *Samprapti* of the *Vicharchika* that *teekshna*, *guru Gunas*, *amla*, *Rasatmaka* and *kledakara*, *Abhishyanda Aahar* leads to *Pitta Prakop*, due to these *Pitraprakopa, vikruti of piita, kapha and Rakta dushti*.

**Purva rupa**\(^{17,18}\): *(Premonitory sign)*

1. *Aswedanam*
2. *Atiswedanam*
3. *Vaivarnyam*
4. *Kandu*
5. *Lomaharsha*
6. *Toda*
Roopa- (symptoms) in our classics the specific laksana of Vicharchika are mentioned by Acharya Charaka, and Bhava Prakasha and Yogaratnakar as (Vicharchika).

1. Kandu (Itching)
2. Ruja (Pain)
3. Daha (Burning pain)
4. Rukshata (Dryness)
5. Vaivarnya (Discoloration)

Upashaya
1. Snigdha Aahar
2. Drava aahar
3. Yavagu
4. Laghu Aahar

Anupshaya-
1. Viruddha Aahar
2. Intake of Chilchim fish with milk
3. Intake of food mostly containing Hayanaka, Chinak, Udadak, with Ksheer, Dadhi, Takra etc.

4. Intake of Mulak and Lasun with Ksheer.
6. Use of Pippali and Kakmachi, Likuch with Dadhi and Sarpi.
7. Use of Meat of deer with milk.
8. Use of Mulaka with Guda.

Chikitsa – Raktamokshan (Siravedha) ¹⁹
Acharya Sushruta described the method of Siravedha as 2 Angula above and 2 Angula below the Kshipra Marma.

DISCUSSION – Discussion is carried under following headings.
1. Discussion on Nidan of Vicharchika
2. Discussion on Rupa of Vicharchika.
3. Discussion on the effect of Siravedha in Vicharchika

Probable mode of action of Siravedha (BLOOD LETTING)

Dhatugatavisyaṇḍitoṣa (Trīḍoṣha) vilayana by Abhayaṁtara Snehapana and Bhayya Snehan, Swedan
Visyanṇḍita Doṣas and impure blood flows through Sira
Raktamoksan by Siravedha
Expulsion of Doṣhas and impure blood through Siravedha
Srotoshuddhi and pitta shodhan takes place
Prakṛti Rakta Dhatu Utpatti takes place
Ultimately Twak becomes Prakṛti

Unashaya from Vicharchika
DISCUSSION

Concept of Holistic Effect:
As far as the study is concerned Holistic means physical health along with the mental health means the well being of Sharir along with the Mana, Indriya, Buddhi whole is Holistic. In Vicharchika Raja and Tama Guna (Attributes) of Mana (Mind) has been affected due Kapha and Pitta Dushti. After Siravedha vitiated Kapha Vata, Pitta get expelled out it leads to reduce in Raja and Tama Guna of Mana it means Indriya Shudhhi and Mana Prasadana resulted after Siravedh karma (Raktmokshana).

Effect on Siravedha Karma in Vicharchika:
Symptoms like Twakvaivarnta, Rakshata, Kandu, Daha will reduce after Siravedha Karma due to Prabhut dosha Nirharan by Siravedha and Rakta Shudhhi, Sarir laghvta, Vedana shanti, Twak Shotha.

According to Charak, Sushruta, Shodhan is necessary for disease due to the Bahudosha Avastha. As Vicharchika (eczema) is Vata-Kaphaj Condition so Siravedha karma (blood-letting) can be given in Vicharchika (eczema).

Although Vicharchika (eczema) is considered as a disease of Bahya Roga Marg, the initiation of pathogenesis is from the Koshta. However applying the usual Shaman principles of treatment of Vicharchika according to Nidan and Samprapti, will inevitably result in only partial cure, therefore Sanshodhan Karma is considered as the best line of effective treatment.

Siravedha (bloodletting) procedure is effective to absorb toxic materials so they can be easily evacuated from body. Beside eliminating Pitta and Kapha Doshas, the main seat of Vata is also purified thereby making Siravedha Karma a truly Tridoshahar procedure.

Holistic Effect of Siravedha in Vicharchika - Siravedha comes under the Pancha Shuddhi according to the Charkacharya which means to purify the body from inside, Siravedha karma not only cleanses the body from inside but also does the Prasadan of the Mana, Indriya, Savva, Atma which are called the tripod of the Sharir. Which directly improves the Quality life, Life Style, Efficacy of Life, Beck Anxiety, Interpersonal Support, Stress which are the main objective of the Study.

As Manas Hetu also plays very important role in the Vicharchika (eczema) i.e. Bhay, Chinta, aggravates the Tridosha.

Comparison of the Holistic Health with the Mansik Bhava:
Holistic health care is an integrated approach to health care that treats the whole person not simple symptoms and disease. Body and mind are integrated and inseparable.

In this, Bhaya, Chinta, Krodha etc comes under the Mansik Bhava which is the backbone of the study. In all these Bhavas, Tridoshas get vitiated according to the dominance of the Bhava which directly hamper the Quality of Life, Social Support, Stress Scale, Beck Anxiety Inventory, Self Efficacy etc. As all these scales shows the prognosis of the Disease which directly shows the imbalance of the Mansik Bhavas which further aids in the pathogenesis of the Disease.

Effect on Validated Questionnaire:
The improvement in Health promoting life style and quality of life after performing Siravedha...
vedha therapy due to Eradication of Dushit Kaph Pitta, Kleda Nash resulted into Kandu nasha, along with Manshanti manifested in terms of all symptoms and improvements in energy level and locomotors activities. After the Siravedha karma Vicharchika Vyadhi and symptoms related to it gone, along with reduction in the stress and anxiety Level. Patient becomes more communicable with other people. Another reason that in Vicharchika Vyadhi generalized purification after Siravedha therapy i.e. Mana Shudhhi in sarwang suddhi. Purification after Siravedha therapy i.e. Pitta, Kapha Nirharana, Vata Niyaman after removing Avrodh in Sarvang Strotas resulted in Prakrut Rasa Nirman, Samyak Vyana Vahan, Mana Shudhhi that resulted in anxiety scale symptoms. Which are mainly related Rasavaha, Raktavaha Strotas Dushti, vague symptoms related Vata vydhi.

Siravedha therapy benefited in anxiety level may it help Manovaha Strotas Shudhhi, Hruday Shudhhi. After Siravedha therapy subject shows slight improvement i.e. reduction in the symptoms of stress related to Manovaha Strotas. Siravedha therapy helped improvement in Mana which in term benefited symptom related stress scale. The confidence of the subject improved after the long term sustained benefit of Siravedha therapy. This also reflected in self efficacy scale suggestive of great faith in ancient wisdom.

CONCLUSION
1. Vicharchika as a kshudra kushta has kapha dominance and even involvement of tridosha can be evident from its signs & symptoms.

2. Siravedha karma will be found effective in the symptoms of Vicharchika and also in holistic health effect.

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