ANGULI PRAMANA SHAAREERA IN AYURVEDA CLASSICS: A REVIEW
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ABSTRACT
Ayurveda classics have given due importance to anguli pramana shareera, a concept based upon swa-angula pramana, due to the fact that it not only helps in measuring different parts of the body but also helps in assessing the life span, strength etc of the aaturation and also the swastha purusha. Even today, the Forensic science with the help of Anthropometry measures the dimensions of different parts of the human body & skeleton to establish the identity of a person as well as estimation of stature, age, sex, race etc. As anguli pramana is based upon swa-angula pramana it is highly specific and individualistic in its approach which gives it an edge over the contemporary science. The concept has immense possibilities and should be explored. This article is an effort to revisit our ayurveda classics and better understand the importance of the concept.

Keywords: Anguli Pramana Shareera, Angula, Swa-angula pramana.

INTRODUCTION
Ayurveda is a science that deals with life and it emphasizes on understanding the functional and structural constitution of the body. Pramana shareera is of immense help in doing the same. The importance of Pramana Shareera, both in anatomical & physiological point of view is well known; whether it is in Ayurvedic or modern parlance. Anguli pramana Shareera has been explained to play a major role in determination of life span of a person. It is told that the person having appropriate measurements will attain long & a healthy life. The concept of Pramana Shareera has been meticulously explained in ayurvedic classics. As early as 1000 B.C. Pramana Shareera was described by Acharya Charaka and Sushruta and later by Acharya Vagbhata. Acharyas have explained the pramana of different anga- pratyangas of the body. Pramana shareera has been explained to be utilized in the examination of the patient. The vaidya has to and must examine the patient’s anga pratyanga pramana to assess the life span to decide whether the treatment that is to be given by him would be fruitful or not. Anguli is the unit measurement of the different anga- pratyangas of the body. In modern science pramana shareera is correlated with anthropometry which is useful only for physical measurement in order to assess height, age, sex etc. It is an integral part of Forensic science as it helps identifying the individual. Whereas the ayurvedic concept of pramana shareera not only gives measurements of different body parts but also gives valuable information regarding life span of the person, strength etc.
Pramana has been given due importance in our classics. Pramana refers to the means of gaining knowledge in Ayurveda. It is also the means to quantitatively express the dimensions & other constituents of the human body. There are basically two types of Pramanas that we find in Ayurveda one is the anguli pramana and the other one is the anjali pramana. Anguli pramana which is based upon swa-angula pramana, is used for measuring the dimensions (Ayama, vistara, and parinaha etc) of the differentanga-pratyangas of the body. It has been considered as one of the means to determine the ayu of the patient. Anjali pramana on the other hand is used for measuring other body constituents including fluids. In ayurveda, Pramana is considered one among the tenfold examinations of the patient. The patient has to be examined with reference to the measurements of hisanga-pratyangas. Different measurements of the body parts are taken by using the fingers breadth of the individual as unit measurement. It helps in the determination of the ayu of the patient. The patient or an individual having appropriate pramana of differentanga-pratyangas mentioned is considered to attain deerghayu.

Before treating a patient ‘Ayu’ should be examined. Pramana shareera is one of the criteria to ascertain ayu of the patient. The other one being sara. The patient having appropriate pramana of hisanga-pratyangas will attain long life and prosperity and with moderate and poor measurements will attain medium and short lives respectively.

A person having height equal to 3½ of his own hasta is said to have a happy life. It has been further explained that the measurements described do not apply to those belonging to the ashta-nindita purusha.

There is a mention of the concept of ‘Sama Shareera’ in ayurveda classics. According to this the individual having equal height and arm span is considered to have sama shareera and will attain longevity, wealth, prosperity, ojas, strength etc.

DESCRIPTION REGARDING ANGULI: Anguli- These are the distal and movable parts of the upper limb. They are twenty in number. There are five types of anguli:

1) Angushtha 2) Pradeshhini 3) Madhyama 4) Anamika 5) Kanisthika

DESCRIPTION REGARDING ANGULI PRAMANA: Pramana is a tool through which valid knowledge is obtained. Anguli pramana is a unit to denote the Ayama (length), vistara (width), parinaha (circumference), utsedha (height) etc.

ANGULI CAN BE TAKEN AS:

1) Width of the madhyama parva of the madhyama angula.
2) Nakha tala bhaga of angushtha.
3) Measurement obtained by taking the length of the madhyama angula and then dividing it by five.
4) Measurement obtained by taking width of the palm & then dividing by Four.

ANGULI PRAMANA SHAAAREERA-CLASSICAL REFERENCES: The descriptions regarding the concept of anguli pramana are available in ayurvedic classics. It has been described in different contexts as pramana of different parts of the human body, as pramana of different instruments utilized in shalya shastra, panchakarma etc and as a unit measurement for measuring distance between two points and also measuring depth, length of different things.

VEDIC KALA: References regarding the angula pramana can be cited in Yajurveda. Angula pramana is utilized in homa kund preparation. Another reference in yajurveda tells that the length of darbha used for homa should be of 6 angula pramana.
In *Rigveda*, a reference regarding parmatma taking refuge in dasha angula pradesha is available.

**PURANA-UPANISHAD KALA:** In *Varaha-mihikya*, the ancient *Brihat Samhita*, a reference regarding 5types of Purushas with their Anguli Pramana is available. According to *Bruhath Jaataka Swara*, Samhanana, Pramana, Sneha, Akruhi etc., are important in the diagnosis of disease.

In *Srimat Tantrasara Sangraha* various Pramanas have been mentioned for making statues which is based upon Swa-angula.

**SAMHITA KALA:** Ayurveda developed immensely during samhita period. It is sometimes referred to as the golden era of Ayurveda. A good amount of knowledge regarding Pramana Shareera is available in the classical ayurvedic texts written during the samhita period.

*Charaka samhita:* Acharya Charaka has explained pramana shareera as one of the tenfold examinations of the patient. He has categorically mentioned the anguli pramanas of anga-pratyangas of human body. He has put forth the concept of sama shareera which was later accepted by Acharya Vrudhha Vagbhata also. This throws light on the the fact that pramana concept can be a useful tool to assess the ayu of the aatura.

*Sushruta samhita:* Sushrutacharya has explained the anguli Pramanas of different parts of the body. According to him a person with appropriate *Pramana* of Anga-pratyangas is bestowed with good health & long life. *Acharya* has explained prama-pan pariksha as one of the criteria for assessing the ayu of the person. The other one being the sara pariksha. *Acharya* has further explained that before proceeding with the treatment it is beneficial to examine the ayu of the patient. Regarding the height of the individual there has been some difference of opinion between sushruta acharya and charaka acharya. Sushruta has mentioned the height of man as 120 angulas. Dalhama while commenting on it has explained that the height given by sushruta is measured by making the person stand on his toes with his arms raised. While chakrapani comments that the angula pramana taken by sushruta is smaller than taken by charaka and there is actually no difference of the opinion between the two. Charaka acharya stated that height of the person to be 84 angulas. Similarly, acharya vrudhha vagbhata also stated the optimum height to be 84 angulas. Chakrapani has commented that height is to be measured from padatala to shirahparyanta that is the top of the head.

*KashyapaSamhita:* Acharya Kashyapa has explained about the anjali pramana but he has not dealt with anguli pramana.

*BhelaSamhita:* Acharya Bhela has not explained about the angula pramana of the body but in ‘Ayu-lakshanendriya’ chapter he has mentioned that if lalata, nasika and karna of a person are of 6 angulas each then he will attain the life span of 100 years.

**SANGRAHA KALA**

*Ashtanga Sangraha:* Vruddha Vagbhata has also explained the pramana of different parts of the body. He is in agreement on the sama shareera concept of acharya charaka.

*Ashtanga Hrudaya:* Description regarding the pramana shareera is not found in ashtanga hrudaya. But acharya has explained that the appropriate height of a person is equivalent to 31/2 times the length of his hasta.

**MADHYA KALA**

Vangasena Samhita: Acharya Vangasena in *Nidanapanchaka* chapter has explained the knowledge of pramana as one of the...
criteria for the success of a physician
d. In the same chapter while explaining about the kudava mana, he has mentioned about the anguli pramana.

Sharangadhara Samhita: In Maanaparibhasha allusions of anguli pramana can be cited. While explaining about the kudava pramana, anguli pramana has been mentioned. Anguli pramana of anga-pratyangas is not explained, different types of pramanas are explained in detail though. Aadhamala explained how unit measurement angula can be measured. According to one explanation the measurement of angushtha nakhtala bhaga is one angula and the other one says the measurement madhyama prarva of madhyama anguli of madhyama kaya purusha is one angula.

Kautilya Arthashastra: In ‘Deshakalamanam’ chapter definitions of ‘angula’ has been explained. According to one explanation, 1 angula is that measurement which is obtained by sewing 8 yavas in the middle. And according to another, one angula is the measurement of the madhyama prakarsha (prominence or elevation) of the madhyama anguli of the madhyama kaya purusha. Anguli pramana has been used as a unit measurement for measuring lengths of different objects, depth, measuring land distances. In ‘Tulamanapautavam’ chapter, Anguli pramana has been utilized for making different types of weighing tools to measure the weight of gold, silver etc.

CONCLUSIONS
All the acharyas have used swa-angula as the unit measurement for taking the measurements of different parts of the body. The concept of swa-angula pramana has been explained while explaining the measurements of the different parts of the body. The measurements of an individual are taken by using the individual’s own finger as the unit measurement to measure his or her body parts which seem to be more natural and scientific rather than measuring one’s body with some other standard. Ayurveda has given importance to individualistic approach rather than a generalized one. This is true when it comes to measuring parts of the body or treatment of a patient for that matter. Two patients may be suffering from the same disease but the treatment given to both is different based upon the dashvidha aatura pariksha. Angula pramana has been mentioned in relation to yantras and shastras utilized in Shalya tantra and in panchkarma also different instruments like basti netra, dhoom netra etc. are prepared utilizing the concept of angula pramana and probably the swa-angula pramana of the patient or the person under treatment. Then there are explanations regarding the depth upto which the uttarbasti netra should be inserted into the patient’s yoni or mootra marg. This is also probably based upon the concept of swa-angula pramana.

Specificity is the characteristic property of swa-angula pramana. This can be utilized in the field of medical science. If a person loses both his legs then rather than using the present anthropometric knowledge to make average based artificial limbs we can utilize the swa-angula based pramana shareera concept and prepare proportionate artificial limbs. Swa-angula concept can also be utilized in the field of sports and designing industries etc. This can be of help in the field of forensic medicine. The concept has immense possibilities which can and should be explored.

REFERENCES


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