

A NEED FOR HAVING A RE-LOOK AT THE TERMS OF QUALITY ASSESSMENT OF AYURVEDIC MEDICINES

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ABSTRACT

One of the major issues that is preventing Ayurveda to contribute to the healthcare needs of the world is the expectation that Ayurvedic medicinal preparations must adhere to the western standards of pharmaceutical parameters. The aim of this communication is to make the policy makers understand the problems that could be solved by simple understanding of the differences in epistemology. Further, this specifically points at the need for the acceptance of Ayurvedic epistemology by the western governments. It also emphasizes the need for tackling the main issue of raw material quality control at the pristine stages of product generation. Ayurveda and Western medical system have dissimilar ideas of institutionalization. The definition of standardization is not restricted to the chemical composition of the drug. Rather, the disease identification in Ayurveda occurs through the study of patient's bodily constitution and the problems expressed by the patient. Hence, we have a patient-specific strategy of healing and treatment therefore, is personalized. Now, what is required is that we have to bridge the gap between Ayurveda and the current sciences and bring up adequate appreciation for the epistemological principles and construct an environment that takes us more close to the commonsense and wisdom of Ayurveda.

Keywords: *dhatu*, potentiation, impregnation, levigation, *Rasa Shastra*.

INTRODUCTION

Historical Perspective of Ayurveda

5000 years back an exhaustive medical system came up called Ayurveda. It comprised of two Sanskrit words *Ayu* and *Veda*. *Ayu* means life and *Veda* means knowledge. So the knowledge of how to live happily was given in Ayurveda. There were two schools in Ayurveda that came up during the 2500 to 600BC. The first one was the School of Physicians called the *Atreya Sampradaya* and the second one was the School of Surgeons called the *Dhanvantri Sampradaya*. In Ayurveda, treatment occurs through the drugs that are either herbal or metallurgical (*Rasa*) in origin. The description of

botanical medicines is found during the early period of *Charak* (700BC), *Sushrut*(600BC) and *Vagbhata*(500AD). *Nagarjuna*(200AD) studied the metallurgical (*Rasa*) aspects of medicines and specially highlighted on mercury. *Madhav Nidan-Samhita*, *Sarangdhar Samhita* and *Bhavprakash Samhita* came in the later period of 700AD, 1300AD and 1498AD respectively.

The division of Ayurveda into eight branches of medicine took place in 1500BC. Ayurveda got divided into internal medicine, pediatrics, psychiatry, surgery, toxicology, geriatrics, aphrodisiacs and eye, ear, nose and throat branches of speciality. Ayurveda

says that three bodily doshas are present in our body. In addition to them there are three mental doshas, seven types of (tissue integrities) *dhatu* along with the (excretory wastes) *malas*. When the bodily doshas of *vata* (nervous system), *pitta* (enzymes), and *kapha* (mucus) are in balanced state among themselves and along with the mental doshas: *satogun* (divine), *rajas* (dominating, royal and imperial), and *tamas* (lazy and demonic), that keeps one healthy, and when unbalanced they cause illness. The disease identification in Ayurveda occurs through the study of patient's bodily constitution (*prakriti*), power of digestion (*agni*) and the integrity of tissues (*dhatu*) and the problems expressed by the patient (*vyadhi*). Hence, we have a patient-specific strategy of healing and treatment that is entirely different from the modern medicine being practiced nowadays. In Ayurvedic system of medicine the disease is handled by harmonizing the doshas again into a balanced condition by changing lifestyle, spirituality and medicating with herbal and mineral compositions on the basis of a person's bodily and mental constitution of *dosha* and *dhatu*. As a whole, Ayurveda is a classical Indian system of healthcare committed to an organized search for a sustained, sound, energetic and joyful existence.

Origin and Development of Ayurvedic Medicine

The story of fight of humans against the diseases is obviously an interesting topic to study and that is what the past of any medical system is. The alterations occur in medicines as the society progresses and as the variety of health problem changes. Everyone on earth is distressed by health problems at least once in his or her lifetime and

not only from now but from the primitive period of human civilizations. Proof for the presence of a systematized system of medicine and healthcare can be hinted even in the archaeological remnants of the Harappa and Mohenjo-Daro, even *Silajjit* has been found there. Ayurveda is the ancient most of all the Indian Systems of Medicine and has its basis in the Indus Civilization. In the time of Vedas, the *Osadhisukta*, a part of *Rigveda* is the longest standing written account about herbal medical care.

A principle based sound foundation was what evolved Ayurveda as a system of medicine in the Indian subcontinent and it has remained alive as an individual body from the far ancient days to the current time. The laws on which the Ayurvedic system of medicine is standing are correct independent of the time period or era going on. The essence of these laws is the *prakriti* or the bodily constitution of the individual. Hence, Ayurveda's foundation lies on the humans and not the disease. The idea of *Prakriti* aids to describe the reason of different persons responding in contrasting manner to the same spur or stimulus. Relying on the prevalence of any of the three doshas, seven forms of *Prakriti* are there. *Prakriti* is embodied in a person based on the hereditary characters from the parents and the lifestyle of mother i.e. her feeding habits and mental state in the course of pregnancy. Physical, mental and intellectual characters of a person are determined by his *Prakriti* through the whole of his lifetime.

These days, Ayurveda is becoming more and more well-known since it discusses the basic ideas of

1. Linking with Mother Nature,
2. Spirituality, and

3. We are what we feed on.

Ayurveda has become an indispensable component of everyday routine of numerous individuals around the globe. Its laws are used not only to heal the diseased people but also to form a harmonious lifestyle with the environment. Ayurveda reveals the idea of precautionary and prophylactic healthcare.

We are these days encountering a mankind, engrossed so much in the temper of science and has become so rational in approach and testing by laboratory procedures that it is not inclined to any system of ideas that cannot be shown in test tubes while they authenticate themselves in their results. Ayurveda slowly acquired acceptance and new colleges and educational institutes of Ayurveda started getting set up. At the present time, there are over 250 colleges, research centers and hundreds of hospitals of Ayurveda. Importance of Ayurveda in the Western world started to increase in the 1970s as the Ayurvedic gurus from India started going to US and UK.

Treatment, Cure and Prognosis of Ayurveda

Ayurveda is not only a single healing procedure. It is a method of identifying disease and utilizing a broad variety of medications and methods. The major concept after Ayurvedic treatment is that all medical troubles occur due to our mental, physical and spiritual imbalance. Ayurvedic doctors seek to bring harmony and accordance again into an individual's physique, which keeps away or treats the illness. Ayurvedic treatment consists of a suggestion in feeding habits, engaging in stated Ayurvedic treatments, medications, yoga, breathing exercises and meditation and relaxation procedures. According to individual's specific medical

requirements, a doctor of Ayurveda gives advice for undergoing these treatments as required. Although, there many challenges being encountered by Ayurveda in establishing itself in the scenario ruled by the Modern Pharmaceuticalized society.

Global Challenges to Ayurveda

Let me also put light on the fight Ayurveda is facing in the foreign land as it is set up within ethnic customs that are dissimilar from those in the remaining part of the globe, that can lead to dispute when they combine with different traditions with other priorities and the contrast of the study of validity and scopes betwixt Ayurveda and Modern Medicine. The deficiency of research supported by verification that are the standards of the Modern scientific model which prevents its acknowledgement by conventional healthcare professionals and establishments.

It ought to be recommended to United States and European ministry that Ayurvedic Medicines are not harmful as when proper identification on the grounds of evaluation of an individual's *prakriti* (bodily constitution), *agni* (power of digestion) and *dhatu* (tissue integrity) and (*vyadhi*) the problems expressed by the patient decided herbo-mineral drugs are given to the patient. This leads to a patient-centered healing procedure that is totally dissimilar to Modern medicine.

I think the views of Pandit Shiv Sharma must be conveyed to the International Authorities standardizing Medicines for distribution in general public esp. US and UK. He said that Ayurveda and modern medicine have different concepts of "standardization" and those who twist concepts to distort their meanings until they can be mi-

sinterpreted to be absolutely identical with the allopathic concepts should stop it. He said that the meaning of standardization is not strictly confined to the chemistry of the drug. If one works under the belief that a chemically standard drug has a standard therapeutic effect on every patient, he is obviously living outside the world of clinical practice.

Ayurveda in USA-A Case Study

While the figure of persistent illness cases and insurance rates rise in USA, higher number of people are moving towards other medical systems i.e. CAM. In 2004 itself, nearly 48% US Citizens had gone under one or more CAM medications. While it is hard to conceive that the orthodox scientific attitude of the west is going to be appreciably dared by even a single member of Complementary and Alternative medicines, it is progressively getting proved that healthcare discipline will go on to be reshaped and add to the medical field by the medical traditions that do not belong to the West. Ayurvedic medicine has started to embody itself in the recent years in this frame of reference. It has set the medical practices that are getting approved by the modern medicine stream professionals on the basis of their efficacy.

But in the United States, the practice of Ayurvedic medicine is yet unlicensed and the Ayurvedic doctors' practice has not been made lawful by permitting through a license because of which the demand of Ayurveda is showing a depreciation.

As the medical expenses are increasing in the States, hence the people are inclined to go the practitioners who are compensated by the insurance firms. The outcome of non-involvement of the Ayurvedic

medicine in the established medical practice is that the insurance firms don't compensate the cost on Ayurvedic medicines. This is an important hold-up for the patients of Ayurvedic medicine because this leaves merely a very small number of customers who have a very firm faith in the Ayurvedic medicine and can afford it on an extra cost. The development of Ayurvedic medicine in the established medical practice is required to occur quickly such that the firms giving insurance can notice the increasing want of Ayurvedic system of medicine among the people of US.

The insurance firms should also have a look at the positive effect and in total enduring less expenditure on Ayurvedic medications. While the ayurvedic treatments are expensive in the short-term but they come out to be far cheaper in the long-term because our physique evolves considerable resistance to illness. While this assertion requires practical prove for Ayurvedic Medicine to be one of the important performer in the insurance firms. Getting acknowledged by the insurance firms can also give significant legal rights to the final target of Ayurveda getting acknowledged well-matched with the Modern medical Science.

Actual Corrections Required in Ayurvedic Medicine Production

Major issue is of institutionalizing of the unprocessed natural substance in initial steps that is left from talking about always. We have to take care of what sort of raw material is being purchased by the industry because in our ayurvedic texts it has been clearly stated that in which direction and in which direction and in which time of the day the stated herb should be harvested for maximum results. Therefore, clear cut rules

should be formulated for harvesting of the raw materials as well and strict quality control actions should be taken. It is absolutely accepted that it is not going to be economical in starting steps, but it will surely be profitable in later steps when the demand of medicine would be high due to its quality control.


A very nice example can be given of Dr. P.C. Burman, founder of Dabur who carried out the mechanization process for the company. In starting Dabur's medicines were produced by hand, following the methods told by the ayurvedic literatures. Burman efficiently approached the course of mechanization of ayurvedic medicines. He took help of *kavirajs* & *vaidyas* and paid them for deciphering the Sanskrit text to Hindi or English(as required) to scientists

who then examined the physico-chemical aspects of what was taking place as the stated methods of the literatures were applied and this was told to the qualified engineers. Then they created accurate machines meant only for Ayurvedic Medicine's production.

CONCLUSION

Now, what is required is that we have to bridge the gap between Ayurveda and the current sciences and bring up adequate appreciation for the epistemological principles and construct an environment that takes us more close to the commonsense and wisdom of Ayurveda.

At last I just want to say,
This is what Medicine is...

 Different thing to different people...



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