

**EXPOSITION OF PRINCIPLES OF SUPRAJA (EUGENICS) IN CHARAKA SAMHITA**Snehal Bhaurao Akhare<sup>1</sup>, Dipali Jayesh Agrawal<sup>2</sup><sup>1</sup>Lect in Streerog Avum Prasutitantra. S.S.V.P Ayurved College, Hatta. Hingoli, Maharashtra, India<sup>2</sup>Lect in Rognidan S.S.V.P Ayurved College, Hatta. Hingoli, Maharashtra, IndiaCorresponding Author: [snehalakhare25@gmail.com](mailto:snehalakhare25@gmail.com)<https://doi.org/10.46607/iamj2908122020>

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**ABSTRACT**

As per theory of eugenics, human race will be benefitted by producing fit and well born children. There are many ways to attain this but can prove dreadful too. Ayurveda, especially *Charaka Samhita*, provides a crisp and clear ideology about how each and every human can beget a superior progeny i.e. *Supraja*. The wisdom is found strewn across *Charak Samhita*. The present review is an attempt to piece together relevant references and provide a roadmap towards principles of *Supraja* or eugenics from *Charaka Samhita*. As healthy mind resides in a healthy body, such mentally and physically fit children will be a boon to the future generations to come, as our survival depends on them.

**Keywords:** Conception, *Vajikarana*, *Beeja*, *Garbha*, *Charaka***INTRODUCTION**

As multiple global health concerns go on rise so does the quest to solve them. One of the important solutions sought after is producing competent humans. This notion is often termed as Eugenics. A British anthropologist, Sir Francis Galton, in his work from 1869, coined the term "eugenics," meaning "well

born," and theorized that humanity could be improved by encouraging the fittest members of society to have more children.<sup>1</sup>But, this theory and its practice ultimately went horribly wrong despite its noble aims as evident from various documented unethical events<sup>2</sup>. While the world is precautious of this idea, a ray of

hope can be found in the much sophisticated and scientific philosophy of Ayurveda. Since centuries, Ayurveda has sought after promotion of wellness with a harmonious relation of healthy body-mind and soul. Ayurveda has been regarded as good for both the worlds – the present and the after-life<sup>3</sup>. According to Ayurveda, the four basic goals of human life are *Dharma* (religion), *Artha* (economy), *Kama* (pleasure) and *Moksha* (salvation). Also, there exist three basic desires in human beings- longevity, wealth, and a heavenly afterlife<sup>4</sup>. Good health is the means to achieve all these goals.

**Need of the Study:** *Charaka Samhita* is considered as the premiere treatise of Ayurveda especially in area of therapeutics. It has been revered through ages for its all-encompassing and crisp ideologies regarding Ayurveda as a way of life. Thus, it was decided to limit the scope of this article to *Charak Samhita*.

**Materials and Methods:** The *Charaka Samhita* along with its *Ayurveda – Deepika* commentary by *Chakrapani Datta* was reviewed as primary source of information. Various references scattered through it were enlisted and careful deliberation was done over it. Scholarly articles, books etc. were also referred wherever needed.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

While ascertaining the need of *Vajikarana* (aphrodisiac treatments), it has been specified by *Charaka Samhita* that, *Vajikarana* is essentially for begetting a healthy progeny. A healthy progeny is in turn the means to attain *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Preeti* and *Yasha*<sup>5</sup>. Thus, importance of having *Supraja* or healthy children has been underlined at the very start of narration of aphrodisiacs. The conception happens when the *Yoni* (female genital tract) is devoid of any abnormalities and the *Beeja* (sperm and ovum) are normal in their proper form & undamaged, and the *Jivatama* wants to enter into the *Garbha* (fetus)<sup>6</sup>. This seemingly uncomplicated phenomenon is evidently not so simple. *Charaka Samhita* has deliberated on each and every aspect of the prerequisites of conception. All men with physical strength don't seem to possess progeny soon<sup>7</sup>. It is a point to ponder that

*Charaka* has clearly mentioned about not correlating physical appearance of a man with his virility and ability to produce a superior progeny. This correlation or lack of correlation is basis of thought about *Beeja* or the smallest factor in human body responsible for reproduction.

While explaining embryogenesis; accustomed, wholesome regimen or *Satmya* has been attributed as a factor in formation and development of embryo. *Charaka* says that, the sterility of man and woman or defects in the embryo never happen without resorting to unwholesome practices. They are capable of reproduction as long as the *Shukra* (semen), *Shonita* (ovum), and *Garbhashaya* (uterus) are not afflicted by the vitiated doshas in the body, due to indulgence in unwholesome practices<sup>8</sup>. Though not solely responsible for embryogenesis, *Satmya* attributes to important factors such as vigor, vitality, libido and excellence of fertility. In the same chapter, a very important statement has been made by *Acharya Charaka*, which reminds us about gene theory. It states that, if the part of the *Beeja* responsible for the development of a specific organ is afflicted, the respective organ will get afflicted too<sup>9</sup>. However, if the *Beeja* is not afflicted, there would be no affliction of the respective organ. So, both the possibilities are there. Also, due to involvement of *Karma*, certain qualities of parents do not get inflicted in their progeny. Here, *Beeja* represents both sperm and ovum. It is curious to know that wisdom of *Charaka* is not limited to these minute scale factors but extends further to their fractions too. A number of examples can be seen in *Charaka Samhita* to strengthen this *Beeja Siddhanta*. For instance, while elaborating treatment of *Prameha* and *Madhumeha*, both congenital and hereditary factors have been described. Congenital or hereditary *Prameha* and *Madhumeha* are incurable due to morbidity in parental *Beeja*<sup>10</sup>. Similarly, other *Kulaja* i.e. hereditary /familial ailments are considered as incurable. Similarly, congenital hemorrhoids are caused by the vitiation of the deformity in *Beeja Dosha*, specially the part that is responsible for formation of the anal canal or anal sphincters. The impropriety of *Beeja* can affect

reproductive system of the progeny to produce *Klaibya* in males<sup>11</sup> and *Yonivyapad* in females<sup>12</sup>. The scope of eugenics is not just limited to reproductive system and its macro and microscopic elements. For birth of a human with wholesome health, many other extrinsic factors play a vital role. *Tridosha Siddhanta* is the pillar of Ayurveda. No bodily event may happen without involvement of either or every *Dosha*. *Vata Dosha* in its normalcy maintains the body and controls all the activities. Shaping of embryo and molding it into normal shape and size has been attributed to *Vata Dosha*. When aggravated, the almighty *Vata* has power to destroy, deform and retain the embryo in uterus for longer period than normal<sup>13</sup>. Also, *Vata Dosha* is controller and prompter of *Manas*<sup>14</sup>. Sound and happy state of mind is crucial for conception and its sustenance<sup>15</sup>. Hence, altogether it is a key factor in *Supraja* i.e. production of healthy progeny. The role of *Pitta* and *Kapha Dosha* has not been left out. During describing *Doshaja Prakriti*, persons with *Pittala Prakriti* are defined to have less sexual drive and fewer progeny as opposed to *Shleshmala Prakriti*, which is bestowed with profusion of sexual drive and progeny<sup>16</sup>. As far as *Dhatusarata* is considered, *Majjasara* and *Shukrasara* persons are described to be endowed with more progeny by nature<sup>17</sup>. As such, all the factors ranging from conception to delivery have been thoroughly explained by *Charaka Samhita*.

## CONCLUSION

The fundamentals of Ayurveda are universal and inclusive. Many of the pressing concerns in modern obstetrics can be solved through Ayurveda. The product of conception i.e. *Garbha* is not just a union of gametes. Its very existence and materialization depend on many factors as described here. The insights from Ayurvedic classics are to shape and sharpen our skills. Thus, consideration of all such complex factors can contribute effectively to generation of *Supraja*. As healthy mind resides in a healthy body, such mentally and physically fit children will be a boon to the future generations to come, as our survival depends on them.

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