

## SCOPE OF FUNDAMENTAL RESEARCH IN RACHANA SHARIR

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## ABSTRACT

Research is defined as the generation of new concepts, methodologies, and understandings through the development of new knowledge and the creative application of existing information. This could include synthesis and analysis of previous research to the extent that it leads to new and creative outcomes. It is the primary need of contemporary Ayurveda. Ayurveda research strives to establish a scientific view of the concepts and fundamental principles outlined in the ayurvedic classics, with essential adjustments made when necessary to maintain basic principles. Literary research can be helpful to solve doubtful concepts from Ayurvedic Samhitas. Basic concepts and essential principles offered in different Ayurvedic Samhitas should be loud and clear on an academic platform, which is a very crucial task for Rachana Sharir teachers. The object of this exercise is to emphasize the areas in *Rachana Sharir* which need to be clarified through research. The highlighted areas are the concept of ancient neuroanatomy as *Nadi Tantra*, *Marma* (Vital Points of the body), *sukshma* (Micro), and *sthula* (Macro) sharir, applied aspects of *shad chakras*, *srotas* (Body channels), *Avedhya sira* (Non punctures Vein), *Kala sharir* (Membranes), etc.

**Keywords:** Literary study, *Marma* (Vital Points of the body), *srotas* (Body channels), *Avedhya sira* (Non-punctures Vein), Research in Ayurveda, Research in *Rachana Sharir*

## INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is pure evidence-based science. In the global era, only logic or fundamentals cannot function smoothly. They must prove through research media. There is immense scope for research in the field of Ayurveda. However, with the scientific developments and refinement of the old theories, it becomes mandatory to have a scientific insight into this ancient but most followed holistic system of medicine. Research in Ayurveda should be done in the areas of fundamental principles without compromising them. Only a few organizations have a well-established research infrastructure for exclusive research in Ayurveda. Research in Ayurveda should be equally emphasized in the literary field, experimental and clinical. It should be able to impact the field of academics. The current methodologies of research being applied in Ayurveda should be analyzed critically. In the last 50 years, it is seen that neither ayurvedic teaching has been changed nor the textbooks have been enriched with new research. There should be the encouragement of research on ayurvedic fundamentals. The research in Ayurveda can be divided into three basic categories.

1. Research in literature and theory
2. Experimental research
3. Clinical research.

Most of the Ayurvedic research is concentrated on drug research. The basic principles are the foundation of Ayurveda, and they seem to be ignored. So far, experimental and clinical research in the area of Ayurveda has progressed effectively, whereas fundamental investigations such as Kriya Sharira, Rachana Sharira, Samhita Siddhanta (basic principles), and others have yet to make significant contributions. The most important topics of research in *Rachana Sharir* are the concept of ancient neuroanatomy as *Nadi Tantra*, *marma*, *sukshma*, and *sthula sharir*, applied aspects of *shad chakras*, *srotas*, *Avedhya sira*, *Kala sharir*, etc. Many other areas in Samhitas can be searched and explored for latent content. Researchers of *Rachana Sharir* should now give attention to the unexplored areas of Samhitas. The concepts need to be validated and established based on modern parameters.

## Use of Literary Research in present research work

1. Proper literary research provides appropriate guidelines for estimating hypotheses in the current study. Based on literary research, modern-day research can be analyzed.
2. The chronological importance based upon literary research triggers present and future research work.
3. Literary research can be helpful to clarify unsolved or doubtful topics by revealing hidden connections.

## AIM & OBJECTIVES

**Aim:** To find out the scope, areas, and need for research in the subject *Rachana Sharir*.

### Objectives

1. To solve unsolved or doubtful concepts as hidden linkages drawn from Ayurvedic Samhitas through literary research.
2. To emphasize the areas in *Rachana Sharir* that need to be clarified through research.
3. To provide a new and clear vision to our budding *Ayurveda acharya*.

**METHODOLOGY** - Research should be a process that converts data into information, information into knowledge, and knowledge into wisdom. This is like transforming milk into ghee. In the last few years, it has been felt that there is a great need for a separate research methodology for Ayurveda and traditional medicines. In the year 2000, the WHO attempted in this direction. It helps to enhance the research in Ayurveda.

In terms of the subject, there are few places in *Rachana Sharir* where research is essential so that students will be benefited. As a result of this, *Rachana Sharir*'s teaching will be improved, and essential ideas will become more evident. Accordingly, textbooks must be enriched with new knowledge so that concepts will become clearer and research oriented.

**Concept of Nadis** - The basic concept of *Nadi* (knowledge of channels for the subtle flow of vibration) as the main matrix of ayurvedic neuroanatomy are mentioned in different Ayurvedic & yogic texts,

has been highlighted by both fundamental and applied knowledge. *Nadis* play a significant role in the circulation and transportation of various vibrations. These channels respectively convey the information or *Pranas* that is necessary for life. *Nadis* with special reference to microcirculation must explore all dimensions of microchannels. 3,00,000 *Nadis* or 72000 *Nadis* have been described in different yogic texts out of which only three *Nadis* are most important. These are *Ida*, *Pingala*, and *Sushumna Nadis*. *Ida Nadi* is situated and controlled from the left side of the body, *Pingala Nadi* is situated and controlled from the right side of the body and the third *Sushumna Nadi* is situated in the middle of the body in *Merudand* or spinal cord. They also give the name of holy rivers *Ganga*, *Yamuna*, and *Saraswati* that are connected at the base of *Merudand* or spinal cord. These are the structural description of ancient neuroanatomy that must be included in Ayurvedic texts. The concept of *Nadis* stated by Acharya Charak and Sushrut should be clarified. The difference of opinion from different yogic and Ayurvedic texts must be clear. It can be proved through research only.

**Concept of Avedhya sira** – Avedhya means not to bed (prick). As per Sushrut Sharir sthan, many vessels are situated near or at the site of *marmas*, so they are Avedhya and by pricking or cutting these *siras*, disability or death is confirmed due to excess blood loss.

**The concept of Kala** - Kala is another topic of interest for Rachana researchers. The Kalas are located at various organs and tissues. Number of Kalas according to Ayurveda, their arrangement order like mamsdhara to medodhara kala etc., some special kalas like shukrdhara kalas and their presence in all over the body with their applied aspects as mentioned in Ayurveda texts. These are some areas of research in kala sharir. These studies are mostly literary. The research can be taken forward with clinical or animal study models. Research gaps in Kala Sharir can be looked for in this way.

**Concept of Marma** - A lot of work has been done on the anatomical correlation of Marma. The Sadya Pranahara Marmas which are supposed to be life-threatening, are being treated easily with the help of

surgeries. On the other hand, some Marmas are still difficult to manage even with the new age advanced medical treatments. Injuries are the main hurdles in the careers of sportspersons. Knowledge of Marma could be helpful for the prevention or treatment of sports injuries. Marma chikitsa, or applied aspects of Marma, are also beneficial in the prevention and management of acute musculoskeletal diseases. A fresh list of marmas can be prepared based on their manageability. Marma is called Shalya Vishayardha (half-knowledge of surgery) by Acharya Sushruta and hence clinical and surgical approaches in the research of Marma can validate its significance.

**Concept of Genetics in Ayurveda** - Genetics is also an area of interest for researchers in Ayurveda. Ayurveda has enlisted various factors which lead to congenital diseases and several studies can be found in this area. Concepts like Beeja (gametes), Beejabhaga (a component of gametes, chromosomes), Beejbhagavayava (further finer components of gametes i.e, genes) are mentioned in Ayurveda texts. Acharya Charaka has mentioned Garbhakara Bhavas (factors that influence the formation of a fetus). Matrija (maternal genetic material), Pitrija (paternal genetic material), Aatmaja (factors that come with soul), Satmyaja (factors that influence health due to good or bad habits), Rasaja (nutritional factor), and Satvaja (psychological health), these are the six factors that influence the formation of a fetus. These are not only the factors responsible for the formation of a fetus but also the carriers in organogenesis and other traits to the fetus. Fundamental concepts of *Dauhrid*, *Atulyagottra*, Shape of fetus like *Pinda*, *Peshi* and *Arbud*, factors responsible for *Beejdosh* (Structural and functional defects of sperm and ovum) and their results are some areas that need to be explored. The above-said factors are responsible for the development of specific organs or structures. These are the concepts of Ayurveda embryology, and they can be studied with various study designs. There is a wide research gap in this field.

**Concepts of Shad Chakra** - *Chakra* are believed to be part of the subtle body, thought to vitalize the physical and mental status of an individual. *Muladhara*,

*Swadhishtana, Manipura, Anahata, Vishudha* and *Ajna* are called *Shadchakra*. The function of *Chakra* is to spin and draw in this universal life force energy to keep the spiritual, mental, emotional, and physical health of the body in balance. *Chakra* modulates the flow of subtle energy. The movement of energy is vital to life and the energetic process in the body is caused by the nervous system. The action of *Chakra* is most relevant to the autonomic and somatic nervous systems, which deal with the body's automatic and voluntary responses to various situations.

**Concepts of Shukshma and Sthula Sharir** - According to *Sarira Traya*, the *Doctrine of the Three bodies* in Hinduism, the human being is composed of three shariras or "bodies" emanating from Brahman by avidya, "ignorance". They are often equated with the five koshas (sheaths), which cover the atman. The *Three Bodies Doctrine* is essential in Indian philosophy and religion.

*Karana sarira* or the causal body is merely the cause or seed of the subtle body and the gross body. It has no other function than being the seed of the subtle and the gross body. It is *nirvikalpa rupam*, "undifferentiated form". It originates with *avidya*, "ignorance" of the real identity of the atman, instead of giving birth to the notion of the *jiva*. The Indian tradition identifies it with the *Anandamaya kosha*, and the deep sleep state, where *buddhi* becomes dormant and all concepts of time fail, although there are differences between these three descriptions. The causal body is considered the most complex of the three bodies. It comprises the impressions of the experience that emerge from it.

*Sukshma sarira* - the subtle body

*Sukshma sarira* or the subtle body is the body of the mind and the vital energies, which keep the physical body alive. Together with the causal body, it is the transmigrating soul or *jiva*, separating from the gross body upon death. The subtle body is composed of the five subtle elements, the elements before they have undergone *panchikarana*, and contains:

- *sravanadipanchakam* - the five organs of perception: eyes, ears, skin, tongue, and nose

- *vagadipanchakam* - the five organs of action: speech, hands, legs, anus, and genitals
- *pranapanchakam* - the five-fold vital breath: Prana (respiration), Apana (evacuation of waste from the body), Vyana (blood circulation), Udana (actions like sneezing, crying, vomiting, etc.), Samana (digestion)
- Manas
- Buddhi, the Intellect, discriminating wisdom

In Samkhya, which does not acknowledge a causal body, it is also known as the *linga-sarira*. It puts one in the mind of the *atman*, it reminds one of the *atman*, the controller. It is the beginningless limitation of the *atman*, it has no beginning like the *Sthula sarira*. The "dream state" is a distinct state of the subtle body, where the *buddhi* shines itself owing to the memory of deeds done in the waking state. It is the indispensable operative cause of all the activities of the individual self.

*Sthula sarira* or the gross body is the material physical mortal body that eats, breathes, and moves (acts). It is composed of many diverse components, produced by one's *karmas* (actions) in past life out of the elements which have undergone *panchikarana* i.e. combining of the five primordial subtle elements. It is the instrument of *Jiva's* experience, which is attached to the body and dominated by *Ahamkara*. It uses the body's external and internal organs of sense and action. The *Jiva*, identifying itself with the body, in its waking state enjoys gross objects. On its body rests man's contact with the external world. The *Sthula sarira's* main features are *Sambhava* (birth), *Jara* (old age or aging) and *Maranam* (death), and the "Waking State". The *Sthula sarira* is the *anatman*.

Some more topics which can be studied are

1. Instability of pregnancy in the eighth month due to unstable Oja.
2. Ayurveda concepts of organogenesis during the embryonic period.
3. Ayurveda advocates the process of Punsavan karma (administration of medicine for healthy progeny) and Garbhini paricharya (regimen to be followed during antenatal period to ensure better growth and develop-

ment of the fetus) during pregnancy. The effect of Pun-savan karma and Garbhini paricharya on the growth and development of the fetus can be studied with prospective studies.

4. Research area around the musculoskeletal system: i. The total number of snayu (ligaments) and types of Snayu (Pratanvati (aponeurosis), Vrutta (tendon), Pruthu (big tendons), and Sushira (hollow tube of GIT) mentioned by Acharya Sushruta and its study concerning histology of co-related tissue. ii. Jala which means network, mentioned in Samhitas is also the area of research gap. Previous and ongoing research help to find out the gaps in the research. Few of the related studies on concepts of Ayurveda were reported. Validation of the structures that are mentioned in Samhitas, can be the research area of priority. A perfect study design with valid objective parameters is the key to good research.

### RESULT

Incomplete knowledge is always harmful to society, and it is very difficult to understand the abnormal structures present in the body and its fundamentals without proper knowledge of the normal Human body. *Sira, Marma, Nadis* etc. are some certain areas in the subject. In Ayurveda, Rachana Sharir requires more attention and opens up new avenues for research in the holistic health care system. So that the students can properly understand the fundamental concepts of the human body that will be beneficial for society.

### CONCLUSION

Ayurveda looks like a covered magical box or mystery for modern medical scientists. It requires more research in the areas of fundamental principles. Research activity in the subject of *Rachana Sharir* can help to clarify the concepts and thoughts given in different Ayurvedic Samhitas. As a *Rachana Sharir* subject teacher, focusing globally on the principles presented in the Samhitas by research activities would bring a fresh and clear vision to our scholars and Ayurveda acharya, perhaps opening a new world of health treatment that is cost-efficient and free of side effects.

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