A CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF SATTVA AND SIGNIFICANCE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF DISEASE

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ABSTRACT

Sattva (Psychic strength) is one among three essentials of human existence (Ayur), other two are the body (Sharir) and the spirit (Atma). Health and life depends upon the proper functioning and co-ordination of these three entities. The knowledge of Sattva and its status provides way of maintaining positive well in accordance to Indian system of medicine. Sattva is an entity, which establishes the contact between the Soul and body for normal functioning of Indriya (sense organs). Sattva bala (status of sattva) provides an adequate status of well being of a person, thus giving a systemic and holistic approach to understand an individual. Ayurvedic literature provides a concise yet lucid concept of Sattva, which is useful to make decision of various therapeutic procedures and techniques. It enables insight, self-regulation, positive attitude and higher awareness. Hence, there is a need to assemble available references of sattva and critically analyze it so that knowledge of sattva can be rationally used in clinical practice. literature of Sattva so that the knowledge of sattva can be available for daily
Practice. This paper will serve this purpose.

**KEYWORDS:** Sattva, Sattva sara purusha, Satvavajaya, Manas, Self-esteem.

**INTRODUCTION**

The word “Sattva” is derived from two terms ‘sat’ and ‘tva’, satto bhava.[1] Satvam hitakarakamiti bhava (shabdakalpadrum). Satt refers to the existence, reality and truth.[2] Sattva is being, existence, entity, true essence, disposition of mind, character, spiritual essence etc.[3] Sattva is excellence of a person that is present by nativity, sustain untouched from any type of emotion.[4] Sattva is the quality of mind and person with predominance of sattva guna are mentally stable, does not causes frustration at time of sorrow, happiness, anger, fear etc.[5] The word ‘Sattva’ means manas.[6] Chita, chetas, hrid are its synonym.[7] Manas is apparatus by which awareness (consciousness) and ignorance (unconsciousness) of knowledge occur.[8] Indriya (sense organs) are capable of perceiving their respective arthas (objects) only when they are motivated by manas.[9] If there is no contact of mind with sense organs and their objects, no understanding of subject can occur. Mind acts as the driving force of all sense organs. Mind cannot be perceived by sense organ, so it is called atindriya.[10] Manas unite the indriya with atma causing perception of knowledge occurs. That is why Manas is one among the nine causitive substances (nine karan dravya). It posses two attributes Anutvam and Ekatvam(only one of its kind). By virtue of these qualities, it moves everywhere swiftly (due to Anutvam) but perceives only one abject at a time (due to Ekatvam).[11] Hridya is considered the seat of manas.[12] Mansa has three attributes viz sattva, rajas and tamas.[13] Chakrapani explains that the three attributes sattva, rajas and tamas exhibit both physical and mental plans. Individuals of excellent sattva have firm determination and steadiness of mind and senses. An individual is said to belong to that particular type of mind by which dominates him. It is cultivated by the repeated assurance, which is provided to an individual.[14] Repeated contact with rajasik things will built a rajasik mind, tamasik things will built the tamsik mind and same with sattvik things will make a sattvik mind. Sattva is one of components of dashvidaha pariksha of a diseased individual. Then add meaning of sattva in this particular context. Status of sattva is associated to the surroundings of an individual. They are not easily disturbed. The status of sattva get alters according to the age, conditions, and stage of health and disease, types of food, types of activities.
**SATTTVA** according to different contexts is:-

<table>
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<td>Charakacharya</td>
<td>Sattva is prime quality of mind</td>
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**Sattva: an indespensible quality**

*Acharya charak* describes that an excellent student should be *udara-sattva*, (with dominant of sattva).\(^{[15]}\) This helps in concentration of mind and self control on the body and mind which leads to good physical and mental health. *Sattva* facilitate to get the light of knowledge which removes the darkness of injudiciousness. A student equipped with physical and mental strength, moral values and spiritual qualities of *sattva* is blessed with fearlessness, for aberration and strength, which are valuable, asserts of human life. *Sattvik* student can stick to follow the rules of *brahmcaharya* and acquire higher moral and social virtue, to make him a noble and successful individual. Most of our successful focuses are *sattvika*.

*Acharya Susruta* also describe the *Sattvawana* is a quality of patients, whose disease is easily cured (*sukhsadhya*).\(^{[16]}\) Such patients have self-control over their sense, which helps to control the pathogenic factors. *Sattvawan* patients are aware of disease so they provide a large space to doctor for making a decision about the adequate therapy and medicine. The status of sattva will ensures degree of adherence of an individual to a particular medicine, procedure and guidelines.

*Acharya Vagbhatta* (*anupkramniya atura*) describes that the person who are *chanda, bheeru, krodhi* are not treatable because *chanda, bheeru, krodhi* are the qualities of an individual of *avar sattva* (inferiority of sattva). Therapies like *Agnikarma, ksharkarma* etc are prohibited in *krudh*(*angry*), *bala*(*child*), *bheeru*(*feared*), *stri*(*female*) and *vridh*(*old-aged person*)\(^{[17]}\) as they are of unstable mind, so incapable to bear even mild pain. If such individuals are treated with these therapies the adequate effects of the therapy will not be observed. So such therapies should avoided and milder forms should be administered in such patients. Even the food which is consumed plays an important role in determining the status of sattva. *Sattvik* food that lead to longevity, promote strength of mind as well as body, health and pleasure. Food is
moist, oily, nourishing and healthy.\textsuperscript{[18]} \textit{Sattva} of an individual can be determined by observing their nature, behavior, attitude, attachment and their involvement in activities in which they are interested. Individual will present the noblest qualities of body and mind. So these things can help to determine the status of \textit{sattva}.

\textbf{Sattva and sharir}

\textbf{Sattvaj bhava (Factors derived from sattva)}

Sattva is the connecting link which unifies soul with the body. On the eve of death when mind starts leaving the body, a change in the normal behavior and inclination occurs. The sense organs are disturbed, strength diminishes and the individual is succumbs to the disease. An individual devoid of mind, breathe their last because the sense organ derive their inspiration from mind only. There are three attributes of \textit{manas} viz \textit{sattvika}, \textit{rajasa} and \textit{tamasa}. The mind dominated by any of three attribute present life follows in the subsequent life as well. When the individual is endowed with the \textit{sattvika} type of mind from his previous life, the individual can recall things even beyond the life (Events of past life). Because of this power to recall things of the past incarnation, the individual is called as \textit{jatismara}.\textsuperscript{[19]}

During intrauterine life, six factors are helpful in the formation of fetus; they are derived from mother, father, soul, \textit{rasa}, \textit{satmya}, \textit{sattva} and \textit{atma}.\textsuperscript{[20]} Innate qualities manifested due to mind. They are likings, conduct, parity, enmity, memory, attachment, detachment, \textit{matsarya} (strong desire not to part with), velour, fear, anger, drowsiness, enthusiasm, sharpness, softness, seriousness and instability.\textsuperscript{[21]}

\textbf{Sattva and Yoga Darshan}

In literature of yoga, word \textit{citta} is intended for \textit{sattva}.\textsuperscript{[22]} \textit{Yoga Darshan} is defined as method of control over the mind. \textit{Pratayahara} the fifth stage of \textit{Astang yoga} is link between the body and mind. It works on mind, detache it from sense organs. \textit{Raja yoga}, unique concept of yoga \textit{darshan} deals with the techniques of harnessing the mind. \textit{Sattva} is the power of one’s unlimited potentials that moves an individual to the perfection. This is reflected in modern psychology as self-esteem with clear definition and tools for assessment. Yoga helps to correct the basic limits of the mind by improving self awareness, self control, and self esteem.\textsuperscript{[23]} Yoga helps in reducing anxiety, depression and improves self esteem.\textsuperscript{[24]} Yoga promotes the quality of life by strengthening \textit{sattva} (self-esteem).\textsuperscript{[25]}
Importance of sattva pariksha
In the context of dasha vidha pariksha, sattva is depicted at point of examination to assess strength of individual and disease. Pravara, madhyama and avara are types of sattva according to rogi bala praman. Based on the strength, the pravara, madhyama and avara sattva are three categories of sattva.[26] Sattva pariksha (method of assessment of status of sattva) is useful to access the bala (strength) of an individual.

Types of sattva
Pravar sattva
Following ten points are measure of strength of sattva of an individual. The person of pravar sattva comprise the qualities of sattva sara individuals are Smritimanto (good memory), Bhaktimanto (believe in God), Kratgya (greatfulness), Prgya (wisdom purity), Suchyo (cleanliness), Mahotsaha (excessive enthusiasm), Daksha (courage), Dhira (having patience), Samarvikranta-yodhina (brave, fighting spirit), Tyakatavishada (devoid of unnecessary tension and sorrow), Suvayavsthit gati (proper way of thinking), Gambhir Buddhi Chesta (thinking deeply and do accordingly), Kalyana-abhiniveshina (well-wisher and helping nature). Even though they posses weak physique, they can tolerate every panic condition due to the superiority (majority) of sattva guna.

Madhyam sattva
A person with madhyam sattva can tolerate the pain, by appreciation from others. When they are appreciated, motivated, inspired and encouraged they can fight against the frightened situation.

Avar sattva
The severity of presentation of symptoms depends on the predominance of sattva guna as some patients with less severe pathology are in state of panic, whereas, some are sitting quietly even after having severe disease. Individual who posses big physique but weak sattva cannot be consoled easily. These are susceptible to fear, grief, greed, delusion and ego. whenever they listen or come across the fearful, terrifying and panic situations or vision or blood, they fall victims to depression, pallor, fainting or death. Such individuals may possess plump physique but they cannot tolerate even mild pain or ill feeling in spite of repeated assurance.[27]
Depending upon the status of sattva individual suffering from disease can be classified into two groups. One who suffering from a severe disease but presents it as a mild disease, because of superiority excellence of sattva, strength and body is called guru vyadhit. The other who in spite of suffering from a mild disease presents himself as suffering from a severe disease due to inferiority of sattva is called laghu vyadhita.[28] Ignoring the sattva of patient lead a physician to bad therapeutic decision, this may further lead to inadequate management of disease which further increase severity of disease or end of life.

Acharya Susruta does not mention sattva separately but he explained the three qualities of individuals according to the status of sattva, rajas and tamas. Equilibrium of these maintains the healthy state of body. Proportion of sattva, raja and tama varies from person to person. On basis of predominance of guna the individuals are said rajasika(superiority of rajas), tamasika (superiority of tama) and sattvik(superiority of sattva).[29] The person endowed with superiority of sattva does not frustrate at time of distress and overcome panic situation because of his self- restraint and firmness. The person with the superiority of rajo guna can overcome problems by getting appreciation and motivation from other. The person with the superiority of tamo guna cannot tolerate any type of regret or penitence and they cannot overcome from these situations.

Kapha prakriti individuals sattvawaan as they are calm, non-aggressive, delicate, stable minded and have pleasing face. They are blessed with steady thoughts, steady determination, excellent tolerance, good memory, concentration power, a little influenced by praise.[30]

**Sattva: An important modality of treatment**

Sattvavajaya Cikitsa is considered as one of three broad approaches to therapy (trividha chikitsa). Sattvavajaya means to overcome or control the mind, or a method of restraining or withdrawal of the mind from unwholesome objects (Artha).[31] Having control over the manas such as to control it or withdraw it from coming into contact with harmful or unwholesome objects is the main object of Sattvavjaya. The term Sattvavajaya implies to that modality in which control the mind from the objects that are hazards for the health is primary focus. Chakrapani illustrates that Satvavjaya can be incorporated in both Davavyapasraya as well as Yuktivyapasraya Chikitsa. This can be secured by directing mind towards wholesome objects and restraining it from unwholesome objects by promoting Jnanam (knowledge), Vijnanam (Knowledge of the scriptures and texts). It diminishes the rajas and tamas and increases the sattva guna, Dhairya(patience), Smriti(Remembers the real nature of things),
Samadhi (a condition of mind when *manas* losses the contact with the external objects, complete cessation of all types of *dukha* or *vikara*)\textsuperscript{[32]} are other methods to achieve this goal.

In *Shrimad Bhagwadgita*, three attributes of nature are described, *sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*. All individuals have three attributes in them although proportion may vary from individual to individual. Each of three attributes is responsible for bondage of birth and death. *Sattva guna* is responsible for knowledge, it congenial to health. It binds the soul through love for knowledge.\textsuperscript{[33]} *Sattva guna* gives the experience of happiness. It becomes powerful by suppressing the *Rajas guna* and *Tamas guna*. When the person speaks good, think good and acts well, it enhances the *sattva*.\textsuperscript{[34]} The result of *sattva guna* is purity of mind and consolidation of of knowledge.

The person with the predominance of *sattva guna* reaches highest (state of abode of god). Middle state (*rajo guna*) is the world of human beings and the lowest state (*tamo guna*) is that of the creatures lower than the human being. Individual with *sattvaguna* worship god, individual with rajas worship *yakshas* and demons and *tamo guna* individuals worship evil spirits and ghosts. Individuals with *sattva guna* like the food that lead to longevity (*ayu*), promote righteous tendencies, strengthen the health and joy. Food which are succulent, greasy, nourishing and appetizing, keep the body in healthy and *sattvik* state. A *yajna* when performed in the prescribed manner as over duty, with concentration without wishing for rewards, are known as *sattvik yajan*.

*Sattvik penance (tappa)*

Penance of body for worship of god, *brahmins*, guru, piety simplicity and non-violence fall in this category. Penance of speech is defined - speech which upset no one, truth which is peasant and beneficial and expression of good thoughts. Penance of mind is considered as maintenance of – pleasant and calm mind, contemplation, meditation, restraint thoughts. The penance of body, speech and mind when performed with absolute concentration, faith and without desire for reward, are called righteous or *sattvik* penances.

*Sattvik charity*

The charity that is done out of a sense of duty, without any hope for being rewarded and done with keeping in mind the place, the time and beneficiary is called *sattvik* charity.
Sattvik karma (action)
The individual doing is karma as ordained in the scriptures, is neither attached nor indifferent to his actions and has no desire for the results, the action is called *sattvik karma*.

*Sattvik purusha* (persons)
The individual free from his consciousness or vanity of being a active person who has patience and enthusiasm for his action but is neither happy with the success nor sad with the failure of his action is *sattvika purusha*.[35]

**DISCUSSION**
*Sattva* determine behavior, appearance, desire, attitude, confidence, enthusiasm of an individual. Most of our successful personalities are of *pravar sattva*. Many times they become angry and fierce; it is an affected quality, not a weakness. *Sattvik* person get angry for a purpose but not because of passions and emotions. Other people who generally get disturbed and hold grudges, are of *avar sattva*. *Sattvik* person are helpful, considerate, accommodative, cooperative and compassionate. Every discordant thoughts, feeling or emotion must pay the penalty in the physical manifestation of some discord. The mind of an individual is qualified according to his repeated action, because that quality must be predominating in him.[36] These faculties vary according to the degree of parity of an individual. Body follows the mind so if the mental faculties are pure then one gets a divine body. Similarly, the mind also follows the body. So as per *yukti pramana*, before *garbh sanskara* in pregnancy, listening *sattvik* stories, motivational stories, *geeta* and proper *sattvik aahar vihar* to mother, will play an important role in the development of perfect *sattva* of child.[37] From all above description, it comes to notice that *sattva* is the prime quality of mind, by which the individual is enriched with confidence, memory, enthusiasm, etc. The superiority of *sattva* is responsible for the perfection of body as well as mind because the physique is merely an out-picturing of the status of *sattva*.[38]

**CONCLUSION**
*Sattva* (*manas*) plays a very important role in the maintenance of the health of an individual and regulates the body functions so *sattvavajaya* sort of treatment is specifically indicated for the treatment of illnesses caused by the unwholesome objects of mind.[39] Yoga is a modality that helps an individual to attain mental and physical stability. It is meant to be done by increasing the predominance of *sattva* so that the mind can be free from diversions and afflictions. *Sattvik* people have a clear mind in which truth is reflected without distortion. It is
hard to define the sattva as mind, because sattva has far more implications. Today we live in very turbulent world, where breaking of law, distortion, violence, cheating, terrorization and dishonest have become socially and morally acceptable. The superiority of sattva is essential to be mentally and physically healthy.

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