A REVIEW ON FACTORS INFLUENCING THE PRAKRITI

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the ancient science which includes all the factors which are necessary for maintenance of health. Prakriti is the unique concept of Ayurveda, which means Swabhav i.e. natural condition or state. Prakriti or constitution of an individual is formed at the time of union of sperm and ovum inside the womb. This basic constitution remains constant throughout the life of that individual. Prakriti of a person differs from another person in anatomical, physiological and psychological factors. Thus the Deha Prakriti is essentially genetically determined and is likely to be influenced by a variety of environmental factors to some extent. Factors which take part in the formation and development of Prakriti can be broadly classified in two groups i.e. Pre-natal (Intra uterine) factors and Post-natal (Extra uterine) factors. The first group of factors acts during the intrauterine life of the fetus, at the time of the union of the Shukra and Shonita while the second group influences the Prakriti after delivery of the fetus. So, all these factors should be considered while determining Prakriti. In this article a brief review on factors affecting the development of Prakriti will be discussed.

KEYWORDS: Prakriti, Shukra, Shonita, fetus.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of Prakriti has been described by almost all Acharyas in Ayurvedic classics. Prakriti refers to genetically determined physical and mental constitution of an individual.
The term Prakriti is formed from the words “Pra” and “Kriti”. “Pra” means the ‘beginning’, ‘to commence’, or ‘origin’ and “kriti” means ‘to form’ or ‘to create’. Thus word Prakriti denotes a state of natural form, or original form. It is opposite of ‘vikriti’ which indicates change or effect.

In Ayurvedic classics, term Prakriti is used for swabhav which means one’s own constitution and attitude. Commentator Arundatta has explained that Prakriti is expression of body functions, in the form of morphology, physiology and behavior of an individual. Prakriti is determined at the time of fertilization due to predominance of doshas. People are born with various proportions of vata, pitta and kapha dosha. Two intermingling sets of Doshas can be considered as Prakrut or Arambhak doshas and Vikrut or Ahar-mala-sambhavaja-doshas. Prakriti is not output of those doshas which undergoes constant variations, but it is formed from the doshas which remain constant. Thus, Prakriti is individual specific and idiosyncratic.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES
1. To study the pre-natal (Intra uterine) factors which affect on Prakriti at the time of the union of the Shukra and Shonita.
2. To study the post-natal (Extra uterine) factors which affect on Prakriti after delivery of the fetus.

MATERIAL AND METHODS
1. Classical Ayurvedic texts like Charaka samhita, Sushrut samhita, Ashtang Sangraham,etc have been used for this study, from which various references regarding Prakriti have been collected.
2. Related websites and modern references have also been searched.

REVIEW
FORMATION OF PRAKRITI
Prakriti is formed by the Utkatata (predominance) of one, two or all three doshas at the time of union of Shukra (sperm) and Shonita (ovum) in the garbhashaya (uterus). Acharya dalhana commented that ‘uttakatah’ means dominance of prakrita dosha. As the predominant dosha is prakrit in nature, it do not harm the body as the poison of snake does not harm it. During conception, a few individuals present equal ratio of three doshas, which is called as Sama Prakriti. Few of them show predominance of one dosha. For example predominance of
Kapha dosha exhibits kaphaj prakriti. When one predominant, one less dominant and one recessive dosha is present in the body, then it is said to be dwandwaj prakriti. For example, at time of birth if Kapha dosha is predominant, pitta is less dominant and vata dosha is recessive, then individual is having Kaphapradhan pittanubandhi prakriti. Predominant dosha affect anatomy, physiology, psychology & immunity of that person. Features are seen according to properties & functions of the predominant dosha.

FACTORS AFFECTING THE FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF PRAKRITI

Factors which take part in the formation and development of Prakriti can be broadly classified in two groups i.e. Pre-natal (Intra uterine) factors and Post-natal (Extra uterine) factors. The first group of factors acts during the intrauterine life of the fetus, at the time of the union of the Shukra and Shonita while the second group influences the Prakriti after the delivery of the fetus. So, all these factors should be considered while determining Prakriti. Factors like Shukra prakriti (sperm), Shonita prakriti (ovum), Kala prakriti (time or season), Garbhashaya prakriti (condition of uterus), Maturahar-vihar prakriti (diet and behaviour of mother) and Mahabhutavikar prakriti come under the first group i.e Pre-natal factors. While jatiprasakta (racial peculiarities), kulaprasakta (familial predisposition), deshanupatini (demographic), kalanupatini (seasonal effect), vayonupatini (natural changes according to age), pratyatmaniyata (personal habits and individuality) are post natal factors.

DISCUSSION

Acharya Charaka has described following intrauterine factors which affect Prakriti-
1. Prakriti of Shukra (sperm) and Shonita (ovum)

Prakriti is decided at the time of sperm and ovum union or at the time of conception. So, sperm and ovum should be in excellent condition. Abnormal semen and ovum affects conception and thus on Prakriti.

Prakriti or Constitution is primarily genetic in origin. Sperm and ovum carry with them the constitutions of both the parents. If both father and mother, i.e. sperm and ovum are of vata constitution, the progeny would inherit a dominant vata constitution. However, all the characteristics of vata would manifest in a far exaggerated form compared to those present in the parents.
2. Prakriti of Kala (season) and Garbhashaya (condition of uterus)

Normal uterus and the time of coitus affects fetus. According to Acharya Sushruta, a male should be twenty five years old and a female should be sixteen years old to indulge in the act of intercourse since by that age they are supposed to be mentally and physically matured. Also Acharya Sushruta has mentioned specific timing of intercourse in relation to menstrual cycle. Therefore planning of conception and consultation is important for healthy progeny.

3. Matru aahar vihar prakriti (food and regimen of mother)

Prakriti of a baby depends upon the diet and regimen adapted by the mother. Thus in pregnant status a mother has to take utmost care of diet and behavior.

4. Mahabhuta Prakriti (role of mahabhuta)

According to Ayurveda the pancha mahabhuta also play an important role in the formation of prakriti. Mahabhutas are necessary for building the body and nerve tissue. Now-a-days it is believed that the embryo is sensitive to sound. Solar eclipse and heavy cyclone also can damage the child lying in the womb. Thus repeated disturbances in the mahabhutas characters may harm the child. This is known as mahabhuta Prakriti.

Acharya Charaka has described six types of jatyadi Prakriti in Indriyasthana. Jatyadi Prakriti is not actually Prakriti, but these are the six factors which influences the Prakriti. In Ashtangasangraha, all these are described as factors influencing the formation of Prakriti.

They are as follows-

1. Jaati Prasakta Prakriti

The Birth of child in a particular religion, race or cast can form certain kind of prakriti. Race may play a part in predisposition to diseases. Thus certain diseases are peculiar to the race. For example TB, AIDS, diabetes are said to be more common among black people or white women are more likely to be diagnosed with breast cancer though black women are more likely to die from it.

2. Kula Prasakta Prakriti

The Birth in a particular pedigree also can play some part in the formation of prakriti. Persons having Madhumeha or diabetes mellitus can have a history of the same disease in their family. Therefore Madhumeha is said to be a Kulaj vyadhi.
3. Deshaanupatinee Prakriti

*Prakriti* formed according to the characteristic of certain place, region or geographical conditions is known as *deshaanupatinee prakriti*. People born in topical countries or cold countries have typical body constitution and are liable to be particular type of diseases. For example people born in Punjabi are ultimately tall, strong and healthy due to soil, climate and diet of that region.

4. Kaala Anupatinee Prakriti

Time and particular season also play considerable role in the formation of *prakriti*. Season by its predominance of *dosha* affects plants, food, which after ingestion affects maternal organs including uterus, ovum and in turn ultimately affects embryo. For example, if union of sperm and ovum takes place in *grishma ritu*, then the child will be of *pitta prakriti* and in future he may get prone to problems like hyperacidity, ulcers etc.

5. Vayoanupatinee Prakriti

It is believed in Ayurveda that there is predominance of *vata* in old age, *pitta* in young age and *kapha* in the childhood. So it can be observed that children are more prone to certain type of diseases due to provocation of *kapha*. Also there can be certain type of diseases which are very common in young age and in old age but may not be found in children. This is according to *vayoanupatinee prakriti*.

6. Pratyaatmaniyata Prakriti

When a subject has some distinct characteristics, then it is said to be *pratyatmaniyata prakriti*. For example, some people may have dextrocardia, some may have polydactylism, etc.

CONCLUSION

Understanding *Prakriti* is best guideline for healthy life. The intra uterine and extra uterine factors influence on *Vaikrut dosha*, therefore any flexibility in characteristics of *Prakriti* is due to only *Vaikrut doshas*. So, while deciding *Prakriti* of a person, it is necessary to know the factors which have influenced on his *Prakriti*. And then only by deciding ones *prakriti*, a person can manage his diet and lifestyle for maintenance of health.
REFERENCES


