A REVIEW ON CONCEPT OF PANCHABHAUTIC SIDDHANT IN AYURVEDA AND ITS APPLICATION IN CHIKITSA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is an ancient medical science has lots of theoretical and philosophical aspect. It is the science that propagates all the knowledge of life. It defines health and all the factors responsible for its maintenance and health promotion. The fundamental principles of Ayurveda are laid down after many times of tryouts. The concept of Panchamahabhuta (Five elements) is the foundation of Ayurveda to understand its physiology, pathology & pharmacokinetics. Ayurveda believes that everything in this cosmos is made up of five basic elements. These five elements which collectively termed as panchamahabhuta are Prithvi (earth), Jal (water), Agni or Tej (fire), Vayu (air) and Akash (space). The balance of these five elements in the body denotes health or prakriti while their Imbalance or disturbance denotes disease or vikara. Panchamahabhutas are basic components of the human body both for physiological functions in the pathogenesis of disease. According to Ayurveda both the Chikitsya purush and dravyas used for treating him are created by panchamahabhutas only. Also sharira, dosha, dhatu, upadhatus and malas are the karya dravyas of Panchamahabhutas

As the aim of Ayurveda is fulfilled by this concept of Panchabhautic siddhant. Hence sincere effort by essay author to explore the application of Panchabhautic siddhant in chikitsa in a systemic manner is done. It is very much essential for an Ayurvedic doctor to develop with this significant concept to make the basic things and fundamentals more clear and strong.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, Panchamahabhuta, Health, Chikitsa, Charak, Shushrut.
INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is the science, which basically count on the holistic approach of naturally occurring alternative herbal formulations. It depends on the basic principle of Panchmahabhuta (five elements). The Panchmahabhuta revolves around the normal functioning of the body (physiology), diseases formation (pathology) and action of drugs in the various parts of the body (pharmacokinetics). According to Ayurveda, this holistic approach composed of five important elements of nature.

Acharya Charak has mentioned the attributes of Panchmahabhut:

महाभूताननखंवायुरग्ननरापऩ: श्चितिस्तथा।
शब्द:स्पर्शशास्त्रचार्यसोगन्धश्चातद्गुणान:∥ Charak Samhita Sharirasthan 1/27

The Panchmahabhutas are Aakash, Vayu, Agni, Jala and Prithvi. Their attributes are shabda, sparsha, rupa rasa and gandha respectively.[1]

And also in Charak Samhita Sutrasthan chapter 26 Atreybhadrakapiya:

सर्वद्रव्यपान्त्वात्मिकमसिसिन्यः चचेतनावद्वेल्लंच, तस्यगुणाः:शब्दादयोगुवाशदयशचद्रवन्ता:।
Charak Samhita Sutrasthan 26/10

All the substances are constituted of 5 bhutas- Prithvi, Ap, Tejas, Vayu & Akash. It is of 2 types: sentient and insentient. Its properties are sound etc and those from guru to dravya.[2]

According to Ayurveda Chikitsya purush/Adhikaran purush/ Karam purush comprises six dhatus, panchamahabhutas & chetana.

खाद्यश्चेतनार्थासर्वत्र पुरुष: स्मृतात: || Charak Sharirsthansutra 1/16

Purush comprises six dhatus (elements), five Mahabhutas (in their subtle form) & Chetana.

Panchbhautic Siddhant in chikitsa

Therapeutical application of panchamahabhutas

Panchabhautik Chikitsa is a branch of Ayurveda offers a new dimension of examination and treatment. Ayurveda believes that all the substances of this universe including our bodies are composed of five bhutas which are Prithvi (earth), Jal (water), Agni or Tej (fire), Vayu (air)
and Akash (ether or space) and whatever diets we take those are also composed of Panchabhutas. Everything in universe, including drugs, animals, herbs and living beings are made of these basic elements.

Depending on the predominanation of the substance, the matter is classified as Parthiva, Apya, Taijasa, Vayaviya and Akashiya (With predominance of earth, water, fire, air and space respectively). The organisation and combination of these five elements and there quantity in a given matter determines and establish its properties. Hence it is very necessary to know the nature of diet materials we take. Thus understanding this basic principle one can maintain the good health by eating healthy according to one’s bhuta predominance and avoiding the apathy.

- Universal therapeutic utility of matter

अनेनोप्देशेननानोषधिभूतमंजगतिकिनियद्वत्यमुप्लव्ययेते

tāntāṃyuktimārkasamāntamaṃfreyatī∥ Charak Sutrasthan 26/1

There is nothing in the world which does not have therapeutic utility in appropriate conditions & situations. At the same time everything cannot be used for treatment of every disease. A drug is useful in specific conditions and situations. So, the selection of drugs is to be made in accordance with the propriety & its administration & therapeutic needs.[3]

Proyojana of Ayurved (Aim of Ayurveda)

कायेदातसांयम्मामघोचरते।धातसांयम्माक्रियाचेतततन्तस्यास्यप्रयोजनम॥ Charak Sutrasthan 1/53

Dhatusamyata (equilibrium state of dhatus) is the ultimate aim of our Ayurveda science. The very object of this science is the maintenance of equilibrium of tissue element.[4] According to Acharya Charak principle of samanyam (similarity) helps in increasing degraded similar dhatus in body and when there is dhatu vriddhi condition we have to use vishesha dravyas (opposite substances) in treatment. To achieve this purpose we must know the Panchabhautik composition of therapeutic matter.

Samanya Vishesh Siddhant

सर्वदासर्भव्यनमसामायंवृद्धिकारणम्।
The general (similar) is the cause of the increase of all things at all times and times and the particular (dissimilar) is the cause of the decrease, whereas the application of those principle in the treatment of the body lead to increase or decrease of body elements.\cite{5}

- **Panchmahabhutas and Dravya uttpati**

Acharya Shushrut has described the *Dravya utpatti* (Genesis of substances) in *Shushrut Sutrastahn* 41 Dravyavisheshviganyi:

\begin{quote}
हरास्तुविशेषच, प्रवृतिस्थल्यस्यतु॥ Charak Sutrasthan1/44
\end{quote}

Substances (drugs) are born from the combination of *Prithvi, Ap, Teja, Vayu* and *Akash Panchmahabutas*, that which is predominant among these, becomes the cause for their classification such as *Parthiva, Apaya, Taijasa, Vaiyaviya and Akashiya*.*\cite{6}*

- **Tridosha Prakopa and Prasham (Vitiation and alleviation of humours):** According to Acharya Sushrut Vata, Pitta and Kapha are the main factors responsible for the induction of all pathogenesis inside the body, because of having their symptoms. *Dosha Chikitsa Siddhant* (Principle of treatment of *doshas*)

\begin{quote}
दोषा: क्षीणाबृंहनयतव्या:, कुपिता: प्रशांतवितव्या:, वृिाननर्ह्र्शत्वे्या:, समा: परिपाल्याइतिसिद्धान्त:॥ Shushrut Chikitsasthan 33/3
\end{quote}

Doshas which as *kshina* (decreased) should be nourished (increased to normal), those *kupita* (slightly aggravated) should be mitigated, those *vriddh* (highly aggravated) should be expelled out and those which are same (normal) should be protected (maintained normally), this is the principle of treatment of *dosha*.\cite{7}

Ayurveda science is based on tridosha theory and as the whole universe is *panchabhautik*, the entire disorders present in different forms do not exist without *tridoshas*. These variations are due to difference in *Panchabhautika* composition of *doshas*.
Acharya Shushrut has described about the relation of predominant mahabhuta in dravya with doshas.\textsuperscript{[8]}

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. no.</th>
<th>Dominancy of Mahabhuta in dravya</th>
<th>Alleviate or reduce dosha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Prithvi, Agni and Jala</td>
<td>Vata dosha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Prithvi, Jala and Vayu</td>
<td>Pitta dosha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Aakash, Teja and Vayu</td>
<td>Kapha dosha</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

So by seeking accurate knowledge of properties of Mahabhutas one can apply this knowledge to establish equilibrium of doshas.

- **Panchamahabhutas and Satvadi gunas relation**: Satva parikshan is the diagnostic method to evaluate the manobal (Mental strength) of the patient. Hence by the assessment of the type and level of satva a vaidya can determine the method treatment of patient according to satva pariksha.

Acharya Shushrut has mentioned this relation in Shushrut Sharirsthan.\textsuperscript{[9]}

This table shows relation between mahabhuta and satvadi guna we can predict that certain dravyas can help in treating the mano vikara (psychiatric disorders) by using Panchabhautika dravyas according to this concept. Stress plays an important role in our hectic lives today. The research on stress related disorders and there treatment is a unique contribution of this principle and method.

Two more verses here-

\textsuperscript{[9]}

Shushrut Sharirsthan 1/27

Shushrut Sharirsthan 1/28
All these bhutas are intermingled with one another & express their qualities predominantly in substance of their own category.[10]

**Panchamahabhutas and Rasas relation:** Each of the rasas originates with predominance of two of the Panchamahabhutas.

**Relation of Panchmahabhut and Rasas relation according to different Acharyas**[11]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>RASA</th>
<th>Mahabhatta Predominance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Charak Samhita SutrA 26/40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Madhur(sweet)</td>
<td>Prithvi + Jala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Amla(sour)</td>
<td>Prithvi + Teja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Lavana(salty)</td>
<td>Jala + Teja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Tikta(bitter)</td>
<td>Vayu + Akash</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Katu(acrid/pungent)</td>
<td>Vayu + Teja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Kashaya(astringent)</td>
<td>Vayu + Prithvi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Even though the rasas are essentially constituted by the five bhutas (elements), the manifestation of certain bhutas in predominance during their origin results in the diversity. These rasas are accountable for dosha prakopa and manifestation of disease if they are used in improper way or by use of apathyakar aahar. Ultimately wise vaidya must know the Panchabhautika composition of dravyas to successfully treat the patient.

**Panchamahabhut and Pariksha Bhava:** The following table clearly shows the importance of panchamahabhutas in ancient and modern diagnostic Methodology.[12] (Shushrut Sharirsthyan 1/26).

1. **Prithvi**- Mala, Mutra, Sweda, Kapha by gandha Tanmatra (specific smell). Also in Diabetic coma, Diabetic keto acidosis. Weight and height measurement.
2. **Jala** - Rasa sarata Examination, CSF, sputum and ascitic fluid examination.
3. **Teja** - Fundoscopy (Colour etc. of eyes), digestion, body temperature.
4. **Vayu** - Respiration and Cardiac sounds, ECG, peristaltic sounds.
5. **Akash**- To examine heart, lungs and abdomen and hollow structures like ear and throat.
**Panchmahabhutas and karma sambandh**[^13] (Elements & Action of drugs)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. no.</th>
<th>Karma (Action)</th>
<th>Mahabhuta predominance</th>
<th>Shushrut Samhita Sutrasthan 41/10</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Virechana</td>
<td>Prithvi &amp; ap</td>
<td>विरेचनद्रव्याणिःपृथ्विभूतिसृष्टिस्थानिः</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Vamak</td>
<td>Agni &amp; Vayu</td>
<td>वमकद्रव्याणिःअग्निभूतिसृष्टिस्थानिः</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Sanshaman</td>
<td>Akash</td>
<td>अकाशभूतिसृष्टिस्थानिः</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Sangrahika</td>
<td>Vayu</td>
<td>सांग्रहिकद्रव्याणिःवायुभूतिसृष्टिस्थानिः</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Dipana</td>
<td>Agni</td>
<td>दीपनाणिःअग्निभूतिसृष्टिस्थानिः</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Lekhaniya</td>
<td>Vayu &amp; Agni</td>
<td>लेखनाणिःवायुभूतिसृष्टिस्थानिः</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Brumhana</td>
<td>Prithvi &amp; Jala</td>
<td>ब्रुमहाणिःपृथ्विभूतिसृष्टिस्थानिः</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The number of medicines required to practise this method is the lowest. The contents are mainly herbs which are widely available and are not so costly. This makes *Panchabhautik Chikitsa* is very valuable and economical, as compared to modern medicines or other Ayurvedic methods.

**DISCUSSION**

Discussion is an important part of any scientific study. From the above review study it is very clear that *Panchamahabhutic Siddhant* is involved in each diagnostic and therapeutic step. On the basis of wise knowledge about application of *Panchamahabhautic Siddhant in Chikitsa* one easily found the causative factors for the imbalance of *doshas* and also fined out there solution for the treatment. According to *Ayurveda Chikitsya purush/Adhikaran purush/ Karama purush* comprises six *dhatus*, via five *Mahabhutas* (in their subtle form) & *chetana*. *Prakriti* or constitution of a person depends upon the dominant *Mahabhuta* in the person. Both the *Chikitsya purush* and *dravyas* used for treating him are created by *panchamahabhutas* only.[^14] Also *Sharira, dosha, dhatu, updhatu* and *malas* are the *karya dravyas* of *Panchamahabhutas*. Quality of any *dravya* depends upon its constituent *Mahabhutas*. This knowledge is necessary to choose a drug in the treatment of diseases. The knowledge of the predominant *Mahabhuta* in the involved dosha causing a disease is essential in the diagnosis of a disease. Since the human body (*sharir*) and the nature are both created from the *Panchamahabhutas*, *Ayurveda* considers all substances found in the nature as medicine; provided that it is used for specific indications and with appropriate formulations.
CONCLUSION

The *Panchamahabhut Siddhant* is a basic principle of *Ayurveda*. It is well accepted & have general consideration that every *dravya* including *dosh, dhatu, mala, rasa* drugs as well as body (*sharir*) are made up of *Panchamahabhut* (*Akash, Vayu, Agni, Jala, Prithvi*). The equilibrium of *dosa, dhatu, mala* can be maintained by taking particular drugs & diet on the background of *Vriddhi* and *Kshaya Siddhant*, which can be managed by *Samanya & Vishesh Siddhant* (*Charak Samhita*). In the body the Panchamahabhuta acts on nuclear level & it is the primary thing which may balance in all aspects. Here with little effort author trying to express their own view and critical analysis of basic *Panchamahabhuta Siddhant* & their use in *Chikitsa* at scientific platform for suggestion & science improvement with understanding the gravity of concept. This may be help as a milestone in future in field of health care.

I want to pay my sincere gratitude and respect to all scholars, books, internet-websites etc. from where I got help. The common references are mentioned below-

REFERENCES


