



MANDA AND TEEKSHNA GUNA – A CRITICAL APPRAISAL

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Article Received on 15/08/2016

Article Revised on 05/09/2016

Article Accepted on 25/09/2016

ABSTRACT

For any science to nurture itself the basic principles (*Siddhanta*) should be authentic and should stand test of time. One such *Siddhanta* is *Guna Siddhanta*. *Guna* in *Ayurveda* are described in varied sense and various contexts. *Gunas* play an important role in maintaining *Arogya* and curing *Vyadhi*. Using *Vipreeta* (opposite) *Guna* for relieving *Vyadhi* has been mainstay of *Ayurvedic Chikitsa*. This is nothing but the application of *Samanya Vishesha Siddhanta*. Almost all authors may they be classic or contemporary have discussed and enumerated *Gunas* in different perview. Classification of *Guna* in Indian Philosophy (*Darshana*) and *Ayurveda* are similar to some extent if seen in broad sense. *Gurvadi Gunas* hold significance in *Chikitsa* because of their usage in day to day life. Two *Gunas* out of these i.e. *Manda-Teekshna* have been discussed in this paper and their mention in different contexts with their understanding is undertaken.

KEYWORDS: *Guna, Manda, Teekshna, Ayurveda, Chikitsa.*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a science of life which provides longevity due to its holistic approach through the exclusive fundamental principles. It has ever shining glory because of these principles of treatment viz. - the concept of *Shatpadartha*.^[1] the concept of *PanchaMahabhuta*^[2], the concept of *SadaRasa*^[3], the concept of *Karya Karana Vada*.^[4] the concept of *Dosha-Dhatu* and *Malas*.^[5] the concept of *Veerya*^[6], the concept of *Shareera*^[7], the concept of *Vyadhi*^[8] etc which are endowed with scientific temperament having strong philosophical base and universal acceptance. That is why it is explicit from other systems of medicine as any science or discipline can nurture and endure on its valid fundamental principles (*Siddhanta*). The concept of *Samanya Vishesha Siddhanta* is foremost principle which advocates the usage of *Aahara* and *Aushada* in upholding health and curing diseases based on its *Gunas*.

Guna (quality or property) is one among the *Shatpadartha* described in *Charaka Samhita* which is the cause for the efficacy of any *Dravya* (drug) and has inseparable relation (*Samvaya Sambandha*) with the *Dravya*. *Charaka Samhita* enlists four types of *Gunas* i.e. *Sartha Guna* (*Sabda, Sparsha, Rupa, Rasa* and *Gandha*), *Gurvadi Gunas* (20 in number starting from *Guru* etc), *Atma Guna* (*Buddhi, Sukha, Dukha, Iccha, Dvesa* and *Prayatna*) and *Paradi* (starting from *Para* etc).

Chakrapani, the commentator of *Charaka Samhita* classifies these *Gunas* in three categories i.e. *Vaisheshika*

Guna, Samanya Guna and *Atma Guna*. In this context *Artha Guna* are considered as *Vaisheshika Guna*, *Gurvadi* and *Paradi* as *Samanaya Guna* and *Buddhi, Sukha, Dukha* etc as *Atma Gunas*. Among these *Gurvadi Gunas* are given more importance because of their more utility and significance in daily routine as *Aahara* which is nothing but blend of *Gunas*, is the only cause of *Vridhhi* as well as *Vyadhi* of *Shareera*.^[12]

Twenty *Gurvadi Gunas* cited by *Charaka* are *Guru* (heaviness), *Laghu* (lightness), *Sheeta* (coldness), *Ushna* (hotness), *Snigdha* (unctuousness, oiliness), *Ruksha* (ununctuousness or dry), *Manda* (slow or sluggish), *Teekshna* (penetrating, quickness), *Sthira* (firmness, static), *Sara* (moving), *Mridu* (softness), *Kathina* (hardness), *Vishada* (non slimy), *Pichhila* (slimy), *Shalkshna* (smooth), *Khara* (roughness), *Sukshma* (minute), *Sthula* (big), *Sandra* (solid), *Drava* (liquid)^[13]. These *Gunas* are present in various types of *Ahara* (dietary substances) and *Aushada* (medicines).

Sushruta illustrated *Gurvadi Gunas* in the context of *Annapanavidhi Adhaya*^[14] whereas *Vagbhata* stated these *Gunas* in *Ayushkamiya Adhyaya*.^[15] which demonstrates their significance in *Arogya* as well as *Vyadhita* state. Almost all the authors enlisted twenty *Gurvadi Gunas* but their application and practical utility in clinical practice is much more imperative to recognize rather than pondering on numbers. Each and every *Dravya* or *Padartha* produces certain type of effects in the body according to the *Guna* present in it. These

Gunas are found naturally in all substances but can be produced or transformed through *Samskara* (processing) up to certain extent.

Apart from *Aahara* and *Aushada*, our *Vihara* (activities) or lifestyle also produces effects similar to *Guruvadi Gunas* in the form of hot, cold, light, heavy etc. So by appropriate use of every substance keeping in mind its properties (*Gunas*), one can prevent many diseases and on the other hand their improper use leads to various ailments. This concept of *Guruvadi Gunas* is useful in maintaining health and curing diseases. The present paper deals with application of two *Gunas* namely *Manda* and *Teekshna* in maintaining health as well as curative aspect.

Concept of *Guna*

Guna is the word derived from the root “*Gunamantrane*” and ‘*ghanya*’ suffix having sense of certain types of considerations viz. political thoughts and it is masculine.^[16] used in the sense of *Laghvadi dharma* also. As per *Sabdakalpadruma*, the term *Guna* has been used in the sense of *amantrane*, *amredane* and *avrittau*. *Guna amantrane* means the property by which everybody in the universe gets attracted or tied up towards any substance.^[17] The word *Guna* is used in different context having different meanings viz. a quality (good or bad), merit, virtue, excellence, use, advantage, effect, result, rope, string, string of musical instrument, property in general, attribute, characteristic, ingredient, an object of sense i.e. *Sabda*, *Sparsha*, *Rupa*, *Rasa* and *Gandha*, repetition, multiplication etc.^[18]

Charaka illustrated that *Gunas* possess inseparable concomitance with *Dravya*; it is the cause devoid of efforts.^[19] *Vaisheshika Darshana* characterize *Guna* as an inseparable entity associated with *Dravya* or matter having no further attributes of the same and is not the cause of combination and separation.^[20] Opinion of both *Charaka* and *Vaisheshika* are similar while clarifying *Guna*. *Bhadanta Nagarjuna* quoted *Guna* as an entity possessing plentiful characteristics. Hence *Guna* can be defined as entity which attracts and tie up all living beings by virtue of its good quality, having an abode in *Dravya* (matter) in the form of inseparable concomitance, the cause devoid of action and which cannot be defined in a single character as it possesses numerous characteristic features.

Gunas can be divided into two types i.e. constant properties (*Samsiddika Guna*) of *Prithvyadi Mahabhuta* and inconstant properties (*Naimittika Guna*) produced by *Samskara* (processing).^[21] Again it is of two types on the basis of expressions. First one is the expression of both the physical and pharmacological properties such as *Sara Guna* of Castor oil and second one is the pharmacological properties such as *Sara Guna* of *Cassia fistula*. Another two fold classification can be done on the basis of perception by *Indriya* i.e. *Ekendriya grahya* (perceived by one sense organ only) viz. *Sabda*, *Sparsha*

etc and *Dvindriya grahya* (perceived by two sense organs) viz. *Snigdha*, *Ruksha* etc. In rhetoric, *Gunas* are considered to be inherent property of *Rasa* or sentiment^[22]

Out of all *Gunas*, *Guruvadi Gunas* are more elaborately discussed in *Ayurveda* because of their more applicability. These are called *Shareera Dhatu Guna* as well as *Samanya Guna*^[23]. Each and every substance in the universe is *Panchabhautika* (consist of 5 primordial elements).^[24] These *Mahabhutas* possess *Guruvadi Guna* such as *Akasa*, *Vayu*, *Agni*, *Jala* and *Prithvi* possess *Laghu*, *Ruksha*, *Teekshna*, *Snigdha* and *Guru Guna* respectively.^[25] Even different body parts of living beings possess these *Gunas* as mentioned in *Charaka Samhita* viz. *Rasa*, *Rakta*, *Mamsa*, *Meda*, *Asthi*, *Majja* and *Sukra* are *Guru* in succeeding order. *Shareera Dosh* i.e. *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha* possess *Guruvadi Guna* viz. *Vata* is *Ruksha*, *Laghu*, *Khara*, *Visada* and *Sukshma*, *Pitta* is slightly *Snigdha*, *Laghu*, *Usna*, *Teekshna*, *Sara*, *Drava* whereas *Kapha* is *Guru*, *Slakshna*, *Manda*, *Sheeta*, *Sandra*, *Sthira* and *Picchhila*.^[26]

Manda Guna

Manda means slow, tardy, dull, cold, indifferent, ignorant, low, small, little, slight, idle, lazy, faint, weak, faded, feeble, tolerant, unhappy, miserable, gradually.^[27] *Manda* increases *Dhatus* and makes the body *Sthula*. According to *Hemadri*, *Manda* is that which possesses the property of *Shamana* i.e. used mostly for palliative treatment.^[28] *Sushruta* accepted *Manda Guna* as *Yatrakara* that is which is soothing or maintains the vitality and stability.^[29] This property makes the drug to travel through the body for a long time. *Bhavaprakasha* opines that *Manda Guna* exacerbates *Kapha* and subsides *Vata*, strengthens tissue and does not help in expulsion of excreta. *Manda Guna* has predominance of *Prithvi* and *Jala Mahabhuta*.^[30]

Excessive *Manda Guna* acts as *Hetu* for *Kaphaja Unmada* by increasing *Kapha* in *Hrudaya* which mixes with *Ushma* and does *Nasha* of *Buddhi* and *Smriti* situated in *Hrudaya* because of which *Atura*'s *Vaaka* and *Chesta* becomes *Manda*.^[31] While describing *Samprapti* of *Kaphaja Prameha*, *Manda* is described as one of *Guna* of *Sleshma*^[32] which signifies slowness here. Also in symptoms of *Shanermeha*, *Manda* is depicted as one of the feature of urine.^[33]

Manda Guna of *Kapha* is pacified by *Teekshna Guna* of *Madhu* as explained in *Rasavimana*.^[34] The concept of *Mandagni* for *Sleshma Prakriti Purusha* is explained in *Roganeek Vimana*.^[35] and because of this *Manda Guna*, *Sleshma Prakriti Purusha* has *Alpa Chesta*.^[36] While describing *Saara*, person with *Sarvasaara* has *Manda Vikara* where *Manda* means *Alpa* or negligible^[37]. In context of *Sodhana Rtus* *Manda* means *Alpa/meagre*.^[38]

In the context of *Teekshna Agni*, it is explained that if person takes *Manda Ahara* it causes destruction of

Dhatu. Here *Manda* has been commented to as *Alpa/meagre*.^[39] In the perspective of *Vrana*, *Manda Vedana* has been described for *Kaphaja Vrana* where *Manda* is *Alpa/less*.^[40]

Teekshna Guna

Teekshna means sharp (in all senses), pungent, hot, warm, passionate, strong, forcible, severe, injurious, energetic.^[41] As per *Hemadri*, *Teekshna Guna* does purification.^[42] So we can assume that generally all the medicines which do *Sodhana* possess *Teekshna Guna*^[43] and act by splitting *Sanghata* (accumulation) of *Dosha/Dhatu/Malas*.

Teekshna Guna containing substances are the remedy for disorders of *Kapha* vitiation where *Manda Guna* is offender. According to *Bhavamisra*, *Teekshna Guna* is *Pittakara* (causes aggravation of *Pitta Dosha*), *Kapha-Vatahara* (pacifies *Kapha* and *Vata*) and *Lekhana* (has scrapping property). This *Teekshna Guna* is the property of *Agni* (fire) and may produce inflammation.

Teekshna is also described as one of *Veerya*.^[44] As *Teekshna* is *Sheegrakari*, so used in conditions of *Apasmara*^[45,46], *Unmada*^[47], *Udara*^[48], *Arsha*^[49], *Mritikka Bhakshna janya Pandu*^[50], *Taila*^[51], *Madya*^[52], *Lavana*^[53] and *Mutra*^[54] varga are *Teekshna-Usna*, thus used in *Krimi*, *Sotha*, *Pandu* and other *Kaphavikara* because they do *Srotosodhana*. *Teekshna Guna* of *Madya*^[55] and *Visha*^[56] if utilised properly can be treatment for *Madyatya* and other *Visha Dusti*^[57] respectively. *Teekshna Guna Dravyas* are also helpful in *Langhana-Swedana*^[58] and produce burning sensation, suppuration and discharge. It generally alleviates *Vata* and *Kapha* and aggravates *Pitta*.

DISCUSSION

Ayurvedic diagnosis is nothing but identification of *Samprapti*. Increased or vitiated *Doshas* get mixed with *Dhatu/Malas* and vitiate them. Together, they form *Samprapti*. For *Shamana* (palliative) treatment, it is necessary to identify exact nature of *Doshas* which is possible by studying the *Hetus* (causes). In majority of patients, improper food habits are *Hetu* for vitiation of *Doshas*. This is where *Guna* theory is applicable. If we take complete history of *Aahara*, *Vihara* of *Atura*, the *Vaidya* can decide which *Gunas* are responsible for the vitiation. E.g excessive *Curd* increases *Kapha Dosha* by *Guru Pichhila Gunas* whereas excessive exercise increases *Vata* by *Ruksha Guna*. Application of *Vipreeta Guna* becomes treatment for any *Vyadhi*.

When a patient of *Shvasa*(Asthma) gives history of excessive *Sheeta* (cold) & *Guru* (Heavy) diets like *Curd* (yogurt), *Banana*, then the *Vaidya* can treat him with drugs which are *Ushna* (hot) & *Laghu* (light) like *Ardraka* (ginger), *Pippali* (Piper longum) etc.

Still, there are many substances, of which we have to identify the exact properties (*Gunas*). In modern society,

there are number of new food items. Their properties should be decided on the basis of their *Karma*. If we think more deeply, *Gurvadi Gunas* are not equally strong in different substances. Take *Guru Guna* as an example. Let us consider three substances, which are *Guru* (heavy)-Milk, *Banana* & *Masha* (a cereal). In this order, they are increasingly heavier (more & more *Guru*). This means that *Banana* is *Laghu* than *Masha* & milk is *Laghu* than *Banana*. These things influence the treatment course & drug regime of *Atura*. *Gunas* have been described in *Ayurveda* in diverse sense. One should understand appropriately the context of their mention before jumping on to conclusion.

CONCLUSION

There is vast scope for thinking in this subject. Properties of many substances are described in textbooks like *Charaksamhita* & *Ashtangahrudaya* but being *Vaidya* and ambassadors of *Ayurveda* it is critical to understand *Gunas* and *Samprapti*. Once the *Hetu* for *Vyadhi* is identified, *Aahara/Vihara/Aushada* possessing opposite *Guna* is administered to do *Samprapti Vighatana*. This is nothing but the application of *Samanya Visheshha Siddhanta* which is the backbone of *Ayurvedic Chikitsa*. So knowledge of *Gunas* is of utmost importance while indulging in any treatment.

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