



**A CONCEPTUAL REVIEW ON PRAKRITI WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
AYURVED SAMHITAS**

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INTRODUCTION

Prakriti is an important tool that explains individuality and has important role in prevention, diagnosis, in deciding the line of treatment of disease and forecast of future disorders. It explains unique but definite unchangeable traits, decided by specific and permanent configuration of Dosha in an individuals. One or more than one Dosha predominates at the time of conception which reflects the Doshika Prakriti of an organism and can be identified by Dosha specific characteristics manifested in growing individual.

The word Prakriti is derived from 'Pra' and 'Krti', here 'Pra' means origin or beginning and 'Keti' means to create or to act; while the Prakriti means constitution, disposition or fundamental form. The dictionary meaning of word 'Prakriti' is nature, character, and constitution, original or primary substance. Prakriti is organized in accordance to attributes of predominant Dosha at the time of sperm-ovum union. Prakriti is enumeration of body features, internal as well as external. Prakruta Dosha quanta are present in a person since birth till death without changing. If changed, death is definite. Being very widely, this word is found in various branches of Indian literature like Veda, Upanisada, Ramayana, Mahabharata, Purana, Samhita and other innumerable references.

Vikruti is a Vikara (disorder) or pathological manifestation. Meaning of Vikara is a change of form or nature, alteration or deviation from any natural state and change of bodily or mental condition. When, these Dosha are not in perfect equilibrium state (qualitative and quantitative) in the body, may present various abnormal clinical features termed as Vaikéta Dosha and finally lead to Vikara in the body.

It is well-established concept that single Dosha Prakriti individuals frequently fall sick i.e. more vulnerable to various diseases, while Samyavastha (equilibrium state) of three Dosha in an individual results in healthy state. Knowledge about the Prakriti is prerequisite for assessment of Vikruti (pathology) hence it plays a very important role in deciding diagnosis, therapeutics and prognosis. It has, also, a decisive role in maintenance of

health and cure of the disease, which is the prime objective of Ayurveda

In Ayurveda seven broad constitutions (Prakriti) have been described, each with a varying degree of predisposition to different diseases. Amongst these Vata, Pitta and Kapha Prakriti individuals frequently fall sick i.e. most vulnerable to diseases and in decreasing order. Those constitutions which formed by two Dosha together are also sick and they have to be treated with difficulty. Sama Prakriti have good resistance and not prone to develop diseases. A person of any dominant Doshaja Prakriti is liable to get sick due to vitiation of any Dosha. It is not necessary that predominant Dosha is only responsible for all manifestation of illness. If Pitta gets vitiated in Vata Prakriti person manifestation of attributes of Pitta will be observed in him beside his usual. Prakriti is important also for the judgment of prognosis. Diseases is said Kashtyasadhya when, Vikara Prakriti (nature of disease) & Prakriti are similar then disease is difficult to manage, SukhasAdhya when Prakriti and Vikruti (disease) are of different origin, it is easy to manage, and Asadhya when season, disease and Prakriti are of same Dosha. Such disease is untreatable and has bad prognosis.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

✚ Vyutpatti of Prakriti

'Pra' word denotes 'predominant' and 'Krti' word denotes 'srsti'. Prakriti, where 'Pra' denotes Satva guna, 'kri' denotes Raja Guna and 'ti' denotes Tama Guna, so one which is Trigunatmaka, Avyakta, Nitya, Karma, Rupa, fulfilled with all powers, one with supernatural

power and one which Asrya of all Dharmas that Pradhanatatva is called Prakriti.

'Pra' means the "beginning", "Commencement" or "Source of Origin" and Krti means "to perform" or "to form". Prakrati means "Natural form" or "Original form" or "Original Source".

In Amarakosha it has been considered as inherited temperament, sense of generic passage (Yoni) and gender.

DEFINITION

An equilibrium state of Dhatu which denotes the state of mental and physical well-being is said to be as Prakriti.

At the time of conception union of sperm and ovum, Prakriti of an individual is influenced by condition of the uterus, food regimen of mother and nature of mahabhutas comprising foetus.

The Dosha that evoked during the union of Shukra and shonita (in Garbhavakranti) leads to the formation of Prakriti.

Prakriti is defined as a group of characters inherited prior to birth at the time of unification of Shukra and Shonita. The preponderance of Dosha is not harmful in the same way as same poison is not harmful for poisonous insect. Svabhavam is best defined as to be Prakriti.

Overall, the same view is given by all Acharyas regarding Prakriti that it is formed at the time of conception with preponderance of particular Dosha singly, dual or in mixed way. It is not harmful for person specific and remains unchangeable throughout life.

SYNONYMS

- Svabhava i.e natural condition or form
- Svarupa, SvabhAva, Nityaga, Yonalingam, Kodha and Balam
- Natural disposition, temper, temperament, nature, constitution
- Genital organ of male and female
- Pradhanam, Prakriti, Vikruti, Nitya, Avikriti
- Five primary elements of creation
- Cause for the production of body and senses
- Temperament of the humors.

REVIEW FROM SAMHITAS

CHARAKA SAMHITA

Sutrasthana

- In 4th chapter, 4 types of Deha Prakriti have been described.
- In 9th chapter, it is described that equilibrium state of Dhatu in the body is health i.e. Prakriti. It is the primal cause of creation and is nothing but a state of equilibrium of three Guna, viz. Satva, Raja and Tama.
- Prakriti means equilibrium of seven Dhatu.

➤ Further Chakrapani commentated on it as ,Prakriti means a state of health.

➤ Acharya Charaka has given importance to Prakriti in prognosis of disease in 10th chapter.

Vimana SthAna

- Charaka has used Vatala , Pittala and Kaphaja term for describing Prakriti
- In 8th chapter, Prakriti Parikshan is described under Dwividh Parikshan.
- In same chapter, Charaka has explained that the body of the fetus is determined by the nature of Shukra and Shonita, Kala, Garbhashaya Prakriti, AhAra-VihAra of mother and Mahabhoota Prakriti.
- Dosha, one or more than one, which predominates in these factors, get attached to the fetus and formed the Doshaja Prakriti of human beings, emerged from the very initial stage.
- Doshaja Prakriti is of seven types Vataja, Pittaja, Kaphaja, Dvandaja and Sama. Characters of these Prakriti have been also described.

Sharir sthana

- In 1st chapter, Prakriti is mentioned as the basis of philosophical background.
- Acharya Charaka said that philosophical base Prakriti and Purusha (human nature) has similarity in many ways. Satva, Raja, Tama, PañcamahAbhuta and Vata, Pitta and Kapha, make universe. All these are also included in composition of human body characterized by different nature.
- In same chapter, Charaka has described not only seven types of Deha Prakriti but also described the 16 types of Manas Prakriti which broadly divided into 3 subheadings Satvika (seven types), Rajasika (six types) and Tamasika (three types).

Indriya Sthana

- Prakriti is influenced by some factors which are described in 1st chapter. They are: Jatiprasakta, Kulaprasakta, Desanupatni, kalanupatani, vayonupatani and Pratyatmniyata Prakriti.

Susshrut samhita

- Acharya Sushruta has described the philosophical base of Prakriti in the form of Avyakta, Mahat, Ahankara and five Tanmatra while describing cosmogenesis.
- Acharya Susruta has given prime importance to Svabhava (one of the primary cause of all things) which signifies the Prakriti. He has also mentioned the seven types of Daihik Prakriti and three types of Manasika Prakriti and explained their features. He also explained the concept of Prakriti according to Pancamahabhoota.

Ashtanga Sangraha

- In sharir sthana 8 th, Acharya Vagbhata while describing Prakriti also explained that, at the time of development of fetus in uterus, regimen in which

mother is involved determines the constitution of an individual. According to the food and kind of activities, Dosha predominance takes place, which gives rise to Prakriti of that particular individual. It is unchangeable and persists up to death.

- In 8th chapter of Sharir sthanadescription about Prakriti is found which is very much similar to Charaka and Sushruta samhita.
- Acharya Vagbhata has described seven types of Mansika Prakriti. Satvika, Rajasika, Tamasika, Satvika-rajasika, Satvika-Tamsika, Rajasika-Tamsika and Satvika- Rajasika-Tamasika.
- It is again considered to be numerous due to relation between sharira and Mana. He has also mentioned seven types of Prakriti like Jati, Kula, Deha, Kala, Vaya, Bala and Atma

AÑÓÀNGA HÈDAYA

- Formation of Prakriti has been also explained in similar way as in Ashtanag Sangraha text and Deha Prakriti has been described in detail.

DISCUSSION

Determination of Prakriti

Prakriti is determined at the time of union of Shukra and shonita according to the predominance of Dosha prevailing at the time of conception. Kashyapa has explained that the fetus is nourished by the mother so identical type of Prakriti of human being is formed from embryonic life. These Prakriti are of three types having Vata, Pitta and Kapha as pillars. Prakriti Dosha quantum is present in a person since birth till death without changing. If changed, death is definite.

Dalhana has commented that, the Doshas which become dominant but not vitiated, becomes Prakriti. Deha Prakriti is also called as Dosha Prakriti. Thus, the physical constitution of some is dominated by Kapha (Shleshmala), of some other by Pitta (Pitala) and other by Vata (Vatala) whereas in some remaining combination of the two Dosha and yet in others, equilibrium of Dosha (same Prakriti) is well maintained. Same Prakriti is said to be superior to other Prakriti.

The use of term Vata Prakriti, Pitta Prakriti and Kapha Prakriti is not correct because in this type of constitution there is always a dominance of one Dosha in the bodies of individuals. As Prakriti means normal or natural state, there should not be any dominance of one or other Dosha in the bodies of such individuals. So, individual having the dominance of one or other Dosha cannot be described as to have the normal state of their body, thus to use the correct term they are Vatala, Pittala, Kaphaja, and these indicate the normal state of their body.

FACTORS INFLUENCING DEHA PRAKRITI

Various factors have been mentioned in Ayurveda which take part in determination of Prakriti along with development of fetus.

Acharya Charaka has described the following factors influencing the Prakriti determination.

- Shukra-Shonita Prakriti (Characteristics of sperm and ova)
- Kala-Garbhshaya Prakriti (Time factor and condition of uterus)
- MaturAharavihara Prakriti (Diet and code of conduct of mother)
- Pancamah Abhuta Vikara Prakriti (Condition of Pancamah Abhuta Vikara)

Again Acharya Charaka has described six Bhava responsible for the development of fetus, can be considered as determinants in the development of human organism and its personality.

Prenatal factors influencing constitution

1. Atmaja BhAva (factor):

The Atma shifts its ground from one body to another, bonds with mind and subtle forms of four proto-elements and is confined in the uterus along with Shukra (sperm) and Shonita (ovum), Ashta Prakriti (constitution) and Vikara leading to creation of Garbha (fetus). Hence Garbha (fetus) is designated as Atmaja. The Atmaja BhAva (factor) directly related to Atma (soul) are Yoni (taking birth in such and such womb), atmajan (self realization), Cetna (consciousness), ayu (life span), whereas those related to higher order of psyche are Iccha (desire), Daiv (jealous), Sukha-dukha (happiness & sorrow) and Prayatna (efforts). Some of these belong to intellect e.g. Dharana (substance of sense organs), Buddhi (intellect), Dhéti (retaining power), Smeti (memory) and some of these are regarded as essential signs of life e.g. Prana, and Aprana (to take things into and to excrete things out of the body).

2. Purvajanmakrita Karma (Actions performed in previous life/past deeds)

The transmigration of soul from one body to other is affected by Purva Janmakéta Karma (Actions performed in previous life). Specific traits of Prakriti (constitution) which have been narrated in Ayurveda to be influenced by the force of Purvajanmakrita Karma (Actions performed in previous life) are Buddhi (intellect) and SvaRupa65 (form and shape). In the description of the causes of the resemblance of the child to the parents, past actions alone are regarded as responsible for the nature of Satva (psyche) and conduct - virtuous or detrimental. Acharya Charaka has described an interesting example in respect of past Karm while explaining the cause of unequal growth of twins in the womb of same mother. According to him, due to past actions the spermo-germ gets unequally divided and hence amongst the twins, one happens to be more developed than the other. Amongst the causes of malformations of shape, colour and senses of Garbha (fetus), actions of past life are also held responsible for defects of spermo-germ which provoke morbid humors.

3. Matraja Bhava (maternal source)

Tvaka (skin), Lohita (blood), Mansa (flesh), Medas (fat), Nabhi (umbilicus), Hrudyā (heart), Kloma, Yakéta (liver), PleehA (spleen), Basti (bladder), Purishdhara (rectum), amashaya (stomach), pakwashaya (colon), Uttaraguda, Adharaguda (upper and lower parts of the anus), bruhadāntra (mesentry), Vapavahan (omentum) are inherited by maternal side. In Ayurveda, Jatiprasakta and Kalprasakta are strictly viewed as hereditary factors and so both of them are responsible for the individual variations among persons.

4. Pitruja Bhava (Paternal Source)

Kesha (hair of the head), shmarshru (hair of the face), Nakha (nail), Loma (small hair of the body), Danta (teeth), Asthi (bones), Sira (vessels), Snayu (muscles), Dhamani (arteries) are inherited by paternal inheritance in an individual.

5. Kala

According to various Acharya different types of Kala (time) can be interpreted as age of parents and time of copulation.

6. Age of parents

Predominance of Dosha in body is existed according to age of parents e.g. in old age, predominant Dosha is Vata, in middle age predominant Dosha is Pitta and in childhood age, predominant Dosha is Kapha. These Dosha affecting whole body, also affect Shukra (sperm) Shonita (ovum) and therefore the fetus created in different stages of same parents have different constitution.

7. Garbhashaya (Uterus)

Stipulation of healthy uterus can be appraised from the fact that defective uterine condition along with other causes delays the conception even in fertile woman and if conception takes place, it will result in malformed child with respect to shape, colour and senses.

8. MaturaharavihAra (Maternal diet and regimen)

In Ayurveda, specific diet and activities have been introduced to obtain child of desired sex, colour, constitution e.g., woman aspiring for a son of tall, robust personality, fair complexion, resembling lion (in courage), energetic, chaste, endowed with qualities of goodness (Sativika), is advised to follow the diet and activities as designated.

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