

SPECULATIONS OF SANKHYA DARSHANA IN AYURVEDA TO ATTAIN COMPLETE HEALTH

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Abstract

Ayurveda and Indian philosophy have developed with the same aphorism – Dukhanivritti (complete eradication of misery), it is therefore that we find Ayurveda is largely related to Indian philosophy. The spirit of the Darshanas is the fundamental basis on which this science of Ayurveda has developed. The different philosophical theories used in Ayurveda plays an important role in attaining the complete health that is physical, mental, social and spiritual health of an individual, which is the main aim of science of life. The ultimate goal of each individual has been defined as to achieve the Atyantika Dukhanivritti (ultimate salvation). Both Ayurveda and Darshana aim at attaining this ultimate salvation where first one by getting Health and the latter through various tools of knowledge. Among the six Asthika Darshanas (orthodox philosophy), Sankhya school of thought is said to be an oldest system. The influence of Sankhya philosophy into Ayurveda is not only at the functional and structural level but also at the psychic and spiritual level. The main aim of Sankhya is eradication of Dukha (misery) by understanding the 25 Tatwas (elements) where as Ayurveda also aims at eradication of disease which is considered as Dukha (misery) itself. In this regard purpose of both Sankhya and Ayurveda is one and the same and both are interrelated. This paper highlights the influence of theories of Sankhya philosophy on Ayurveda to attain complete health.

Key words: Ayurveda; Philosophy; Samkhya; Dukhanivritti; complete health.

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INTRODUCTION

In the Land of India, there are different traditions of religion and philosophy handed down in regular succession. Although the exposition and interpretations of all the Darshanas (philosophies) are different from one another, they have a common goal which is to acquire knowledge of the highest truth and to attain supreme bliss. All the Darshanas have their own separate codes of conduct and propriety. Consider a tree which has many different branches and although they are not all alike, some being small and some being big, the flavor of all the fruits of that tree is the same. This is because all the branches are from the same root. In the same way, the roots of all different Darshanas are Vedas. Some Darshanas contain the direct testimony of Vedas; some find the testimony of Vedas in an indirect way through the traditional teachings handed down in regular succession of Acharyas of that order. However, in all the Darshanas, we find an elaboration of the Vedas alone. Various Darshana traditions arose and began to be passed down in regular succession.

The word 'Darshana' terminates in the verb 'Drush' which is 'to see'. The word 'Darshan' means to know, to inspect or examine, or to view with due respect. The Sanskrit saying "Drushyate anena iti darshanam" defines Darshana as that which enables one to see.^[1] The main objective of all the Darshans is describing the soul principle. The world, the embodied soul, God and the Final Liberation (Moksha) are the four main concepts discussed in all the Darshans.^[2] These questions have been discussed from the point of view of past, present and future lives up to the Final Liberation. There is a very close association between life and the Darshans. In short, life and Darshans are designed for each other. To bestow an embodied soul undergoing the three types of suffering, with Serenity (Shanti) and satisfaction and to liberate one from the world full of conflicts,

the various Darshans were compiled in India.^[3]

The Indian Darshans can be grossly classified into theist (Asthika) and atheist (Nasthika) Darshanas. The theist Darshanas believe in the Vedas as the axiom while the atheist Darshanas do not. From this point of view the Nyaya, Vaisheshik, Sankhya, Yoga, Mimansa and Vedanta are theist Darshanas and Charvak, Jain and Buddhist are atheist Darshanas.^[4]

Ayurveda is a medical science and its purpose is to heal and to maintain the quality and longevity of life. It is an art of daily living that has evolved from practical, philosophical and spiritual illumination, rooted in the understanding of Creation." Ayurveda being Upaveda of Atharvaveda has its roots in Veda. Both Ayurveda and Indian philosophy have developed with the same aphorism - Dukhanivritti, it is therefore that we find Ayurveda is largely related to Indian philosophy. The spirit of the Darshanas is the fundamental basis on which this applied science of Ayurveda has developed. The different philosophical theories used in Ayurveda play an important role in total that is physical, mental, social and spiritual health of an individual, which is the aim of science of life.

While describing the importance of study of other literature, both Charaka and Sushruta quotes that study of only one Shastra (school of thought) is not sufficient. Scholar should have the knowledge of other contemporary science too.^[5]

It suggests the importance regarding the study of Darshana for an Ayurveda scholar because; this life science is completely based on philosophical background without the study of which the knowledge of Ayurveda is incomplete. As like other Darshanas, Sankhya Darshana has greater influence on Ayurveda. The concepts of Sankhya were found in

Ayurveda as per the Chikitsa (treatment) point of view.

Speculations of Sankhya Darshana

The Sankhya school of philosophy is considered as old as the Upanishadas and its tenets were laid down by the legendary sage Kapila.

The word Sankhya refers to “Samyak Khyati Va Samkhya Va Samyak Jnana” – meaning to get a perfect knowledge or getting the knowledge in total. [6] Word Sankhya also means number. Main aim of Sankhya is to get Moksha (liberation) by complete understanding of the 25 Tatwa (elements). Thus the name Sankhya is also meaningful.

Trividha Dukha (three types of miseries)

Three types of miseries viz. Adhyatmika (physical in its character), Adhibhoutika (due to any disturbance in the physical environments of a man) and Adhidaivika (due to the acts of God) are explained by Sankhya philosophy. “Trividha Dukha Aatyanta Nivrittih” (complete eradication of the three types of miseries) is the main aim of Sankhya Darshana. Sankhya believes that Tatva Jnana (knowledge of the elements) is the only way to get rid of these three Dukhas (miseries) and to get Moksha (salvation). Thus by understanding the nature of twenty-five elements in total one can attain this. [7]

Panchavimshati Tatwa (twenty five elements)

Sankhya postulates 25 principles for the creation of universe. Prakriti (unmanifest) and Purusha (primordial cosmic soul) are the two main principles. From the Prakriti, Vikritis (products) like Mahat (the second principle), Ahankara (third principle), Panchatanmatra (subtle form of five elements), Ekadasha Indriya (eleven organs of perception) and Panchmahabhuta (five elements) are

produced. [8] Thus Prakriti is the resource from which other elements are produced. But it alone cannot produce anything. Only with the combination of Purusha, the 25th element, she is able to reproduce. This Purusha is neither Prakriti (producer) nor Vikriti (product/evolute), he is Nirguna (not processing the quality), Nishkriya (without any action) and Shuddha chaitanya Swarupa (pure soul). The Guna (quality) and Kriya (action) are related to Prakriti. [9]

Triguna (three main qualities)

Satwa, Raja and Tamas are said to be the three components of Prakriti, the same is transformed to its products. That is from Prakriti till Panchabhutas possess these three Gunas (qualities). [10] These three are the main causative factor for rebirth or salvation. When there is in equilibrium of these Gunas of Prakriti it initiates in the creation with the contact of Purusha. But once the state of three Gunas comes in equal level, there will be Sarga/ Moksha/ Salvation. [11]

Satkarya Vada

This is one of the most important Vada (doctrine) explained by Sankhya which is very important in explaining the cosmology. According to this Vada, Karya/ effect is already present in its Karana/cause and it is not a new thing to produce. Effect is the transformation of Cause and it resides in the cause in Beeja rupa (subtle form). From Asat or from Shunyatha (non existing) matter cannot be produced. To prove this Sankhya describes five principles. They are

- Asat akaranat – from Asat (non existing) the Sat (existing) cannot be produced.
- Upadana grahanat – there should be a reliable cause for the production of effect
- Sarvasambhava Abhavat – every effect cannot be produced from one cause.

- Shaktasya Shakya karanat – even an expert cannot produce a thing which is not present in the cause.
- Karanabhavat – there should be a particular Karana (cause).^[12]

Pramanas / Epistemology

Sankhya philosophy accepts three types of means of knowledge viz. Pratyaksha (direct perception), Anumana (inference) and Shabdha (testimony).^[13] These help the common man to know the reality of the world and to come out of the vicious circle of bondage.

Sankhya theories in Ayurveda

As like Sankhya, Ayurveda also explains the role of 25 elements in the creation of universe.^{[14][15]} But the only difference among both is Ayurveda accepts Indriyas (sense organs) as Bhoutikas/ products of panchabhutas^[16] not Ahankarikas as explained by Sankhya.^[17] This difference is mainly concerned for the treatment point of view. Charakacharya while explaining the origin of Purusha (human) and Roga (disease) says that – “both are produced by the combination of six elements viz. Panchamahabhuta and Atma”. This is called Rashi purusha or Karma purusha who is the main land for treatment. He also says that, this has been certified by the scholars of Adya Sankhya.^[18]

The role of Trigunas is clearly explained in Ayurveda in the production of Sharirika (physical) and Manasika Bhavas(mental factors) as well as Roga (disease). All the factors of body are produced out of the combination and permutation of Trigunas. For example, Vata is dominant with Raja; Pitta is dominant with Satva; Kapha with Tama.^[19] Diseases like Apasmara,^[20] Unmada^[21] and Atatvabhinivesha^[22] are caused due to the increase of Rajas and Tamas. Ayurveda also describes the role of Trigunas in attaining

Moksha.^[23] The equilibrium state of three Gunas is very important to attain this. Three types of Dukhas (miseries) viz. Adhibhoutika, Adhidaivika and Adhyatmika are also explained in Ayurveda along with their treatment. Sushruta has enumerated several subtypes of these three Vyadhis.^[24] Whole Ayurveda is explained to cure the diseases which all come under these three diseases. The most popular theory of Sankhya viz Satkarya Vada is also the basic theory of Ayurveda. In Satkarya Vada, Karana is converted into Karya. Dhatusamyata (equilibrium of body elements) is the main Karya^[25] in Ayurveda which is attained through the Shat Karanas (six causes)^[26] viz. Samanya (commonness), Vishesa (specificity), Dravya (objects), Guna (quality), Karma (action) and Samavaya (inherent). The Pramanas (tools of examination)^[27] viz Pratyaksha, Anumana and Shabda are very important tools of knowledge in diagnose and treatment of various diseases.

Sankhya theories in attainment of complete health

When we go into the derivation of word Ayurveda it is derived from Vid Dhatu. It has three meanings – Vid Jnane – to get the knowledge, Vid Vicharane – which explains, Vid Labhe – which gives benefit.^[28] The one which gives the knowledge of Ayu (life span) is called Ayurveda. Here Ayu refers the combination of Sharira (body), Indriya (sense organs), Satva (mind) and Atma (soul).^[29]

Ayurveda is the science of life which explains or gives the knowledge of four types of Ayu. They are Hitayu (useful life), Ahitayu (unuseful life), Sukhayu (happy life) and Dukhayu (unhappy life).^[30] Detail knowledge about these types of Ayu is very essential to lead a good life.

When we go through the definition of Darshana, it also means that the instrument or media by which Sathyajnana (true knowledge) is perceived. Sankhya also explains attaining

the complete knowledge regarding the 25 Tatwas there by attaining ultimate salvation. Following the ancient Darshana, Ayurveda also act as a media or instrument through which the truth pertaining to Ayu is obtained. The goal of Ayu is nothing but getting the Purusharthas (goals of life). Ayurveda depicts Arogya/Swasthata/Health is very necessary to attain the Purusharthas.^[31]

Defining Swastha (healthy), Sushruthacharya says "A person in which the Dosha (body humors), Agni (fire), Dhatu (tissues) and Mala (waste products) are doing normal functions and in whom there is pleasing of soul, sense organs along with their objectives and the mind is considered to be Swastha".^[32]

Ayurveda consider a person to be healthy when his physical and mental functions are normal and also his social communication is good. This is explained in four types of Ayu. To attain this physical, mental and social health he should have purity in his mind and heart which is nothing but the spiritual health. Now, a question arises - how the Sankhya theories that have been taken by Ayurveda help in attaining the complete health?

Ayurveda being a life science is firmly based on the philosophical aspects. The theories of Ayurveda are of two types viz. fundamental and applied. For the applied aspects one must know the fundamental aspects which are mainly based on Darshana. The applied science includes the structural, functional, psychic and spiritual aspects of a person. If there is defect in any one of the aspects person cannot be considered Healthy. The knowledge of all these four aspects comes from the fundamental knowledge. Theories of Sankhya like Prakriti, Purusha, Triguna, Trividha Dukha, different Vadas and Pramanas are accepted by Ayurveda as per the applied aspect of view.

The Panchamahabhutas are the structural entity from which the body and its

components are formed. The functional entity of body i.e. Tridoshas are also produced from these. The knowledge of this is very essential in attaining the physical health. The Trigunas are the basic components which are very essential for the psychological well being of the person. Satva or Manas plays an important role in maintaining the mental and social health of a person. Even Sharirika Vyadhi can also be produced from the affliction of Satva. If there is aggravation of Rajas and Tamo gunas of mind it leads to Prajnaparadha (faulty perception) which is said to be one of the three important causes for all the disorders.

Now regarding the spiritual health, one has to know about the self. That is nothing but Atma (soul). The Atmajnana (knowledge of the self) is very essential for being healthy because it is the root for attaining any type of Jnana (knowledge).^[33]

The impulse from soul reaches mind, there to the sense organs and then to their objects. Then only the knowledge of any thing is obtained. If at all Atma shuddhi (clarity of mind) is not there, the knowledge perceived by it is also become false. In this regard soul plays an important role in attaining the health.

Atyantika Dukha nivritti (ultimate salvation) is the main aim of Sankhya. Even Ayurveda aims for the same. In Ayurveda Dukha (Misery) refers to Roga (disease). Thus eradication of this Disease and attainment of complete health is its main intend. Both the systems aim at same thing but defers in their way of eradication. The basic concepts of Sankhya are utilized in Ayurveda as per Chikitsa (treatment) point of view.

CONCLUSION

The Darshanik principles in Ayurveda have been so modified that these principles have become Ayurvedic in nature and so in Ayurvedic field these principles are popularly known as Ayurveda Siddhantas. Ayurveda has

taken the fundamental principles of Sankhya school of thought which are helpful in its applied aspects. These ideologies are very essential tools to attain the complete health of a person.

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