

## 'RAGADI ROGA' PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS AS ROOT CAUSE OF ALL DISEASES- A CRITICAL REVIEW OF AN AYURVEDIC CONCEPT.

Dhruva Prasad<sup>1</sup>, KS Datta Sharma<sup>2</sup>, Ramakanta Rout<sup>3</sup>, Pradip Kumar Panda<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Assistant Professor, Sri Sri College of Ayurvedic Science and Research Hospital, Sri Sri University, Cuttack, Odisha.

<sup>2</sup>Professor and HOD, Department of Siddhanta, Samhita and Sanskrit, Sri Sri College of Ayurvedic Science and Research Hospital, Sri Sri University, Cuttack, Odisha.

<sup>3</sup>Professor and HOD, Department of Swasthavritta and Yoga, Sri Sri College of Ayurvedic Science and Research Hospital, Sri Sri University, Cuttack, Odisha.

<sup>4</sup>Dean, Sri Sri College of Ayurvedic Science and Research Hospital, Sri Sri University, Cuttack, Odisha

Corresponding Author: [drdhruvapasrad@gmail.com](mailto:drdhruvapasrad@gmail.com)

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### ABSTRACT

The ultimate goal of human life is to be healthy and stay free from diseases. But humans are suffering from various kinds of diseases, thus leading to misery and unhappiness. Man has been searching for the root cause of all diseases since ages. Various concepts and theories were proposed by many learned scholars. *Acharya Vagbhata* has proposed that desire is the root cause of all diseases.<sup>1</sup> So the utmost goal of human life is to learn to control the mind and his desires to prevent diseases and stay happy.

**Keywords:** Health, Disease, Desire, Mind, *Raga*,

### INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is an age-old medical Science that originated in the Indian sub-continent. The core objective

of Ayurveda is prevention of diseases and promotion of health in a healthy person, treat the diseased indi-

vidual as required.<sup>2</sup> Ayurveda principles are based on the universal principle of *Tridoshas* and *Panchamahabhoota*.<sup>3</sup> In Ancient times people were fearful of diseases and suffering, thus they used to follow the principles of Ayurveda with utmost faith and devotion. In Modern times, with the evolution of germ theory of disease, there have been a paradigm shift from traditional medicines like Ayurveda to the former in prospects of quick and sudden relief. All the Ayurvedic principles were forgotten by the people. People had no control over the foods and lifestyle. They did not know what is right and what is wrong? The result was dangerous. More people started became prey to all kinds of diseases. Recent trend of sedentary based work and lack of physical activity has increased the problems by many folds. People are taking work load they can hardly tolerate leading to stress, tension, anxiety, depression etc. Conventional medicines also don't offer much scope in the perspective of promotion of health or disease prevention except a few common points. Modern Medicine also doesn't talk about any single common aetiology of diseases. Ayurveda on the other hand is built on a strong fundamental principle and philosophy. It has said that desires are the root cause of all diseases as a common etiology.

### **Aims and Objectives**

1. To review the concept of *Ragadi Roga* as a common etiology of all diseases
2. To formulate strategies to regulate the deviations of the mind to prevent diseases.

### **Materials and Methods**

- A. Literature search - Review of literature regarding the concept of '*Ragadi Roga*' is collected from the classical texts of Ayurveda and other relevant literature.
- B. Type of Study - Fundamental Study- Literary study of the concept of '*Ragadi roga*'

### **'Ragadi Roga'**

*Ragadi* represents the various deviations of the emotions of the mind beginning with *raga*. It includes *Raga*, *Dvesha*, *Lobha*, *Moha*, *Mada* and *Matsarya*. This concept is explained as a part of the obeisance to the lord in the beginning of the text.<sup>4</sup> *Raga* and *Roga*

are always mutually interconnected with each other.<sup>5</sup> *Raga* is the most common single cause of *Roga* (Disease).<sup>6</sup> When the disease is caused by *raga*, it spreads uniformly in the body leading to the vitiation of all the three *doshas*.<sup>7</sup> *Apoorva Vaidya* is the one who has overcome the deviations of the mind beginning with *raga*.

### **Raga**

*Raga* means staining of the pure mind with *Rajas* and *tamas*. *Raga* is the inability to differentiate between good and bad.<sup>8</sup>

### **Autsukhya**

*Autsukhya* means not satisfied in each situation and characterised by excessive anxiety.<sup>9</sup>

### **Moha**

*Moha* is confusion due to clouded conscience, being a property of *tamas*.<sup>10</sup>

### **Arati**

*Arati* is the inability to be at one place or one posture. It literally translates to restlessness. It also means unhappiness.<sup>11</sup>

### **Roga**

*Roga* can be considered as the imbalance of *doshas* and health as balanced state. That which causes pain in the body and mind is *Roga*. Increased temperature of body and mind is *Roga*. Thus because of the *raga*, it causes pain in both body and mind.

### **Vyadhi**

*Vyadhi* is that state when the organism is attended with grief.

### **Classification of roga**

Diseases are broadly classified into 2 based on nature of their causes.

*Nija* (Due to intrinsic factors)

*Agantu* (Due to extrinsic factors)<sup>12</sup>

Based on the location it is broadly classified into 2

*Kaya Adhithana* (Body)

*Mano Adhithana* (Mind)<sup>13</sup>

### **Samprapti or pathogenesis**

Acharya has said that *Raga* is the root cause of all *Roga* since *Raga* and *Roga* are mutually interlinked. It spreads throughout the body without leaving any single part and it grossly vitiates the *Rajas* and *Tamas* in the *Manas* which in turn vitiates all the *Tridoshas*

*i.e Vata, Pitta, Kapha* in the body leading to diseases based on the person's body condition and *Tridoshas* vitiation. Thus, both the mind and body are affected.<sup>14</sup>

## DISCUSSION

The ultimate objective of human life is to stay healthy and free from diseases. But unfortunately, man has been affected by diseases since the advent of humanity. Man has been trying to overcome diseases since then. So, what might be the common etiogenesis for all diseases. Various answers can be put forth like poor personal hygiene, bad deeds, bad action, environmental changes etc but acharya has concluded that mental deviations beginning with *Raga* is the root cause of all diseases. Attachment, unhealthy aversion and greed are also known as *Mahavishas*.<sup>15</sup> Body and Mind are extremely inter-related so that any ailment, affecting mind has its adverse effect on body and vice-versa. Attachment, Aversion, Greed, Confusion, Vanity and Competitive mentality haunt the organisms for their whole life and induce anxiety, confusion and restlessness which are beyond cure. He, the almighty can alone cure these. The author prays to the Almighty in the beginning of this literature as an atonement to man's imperfections. According to Indian concept, all knowledge began from the creator and hence he, himself is the first and foremost physician. The mind is the seat of health and diseases. This philosophy is reflected in all major religions of the world; Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity, Islam etc are not exceptions. The mind is compared to snake in most of these religions. We know that if mind is controlled, all major problems of the world is tackled. Everything, sane or evil arises from mind.<sup>16</sup> Thus the most important thing is to control the mind. It is interesting to note here that *Acharya Vagbhata* has greatly understood that mind is the most superior and it is responsible for the various diseases of the body. Thus, if mind is controlled not only, we will be happy but also able to prevent various diseases. Various lifestyle diseases that we see in today's world are due to improper mind. People are thinking more, taking more stress than what their mind could handle so

people are not happy in domestic life, nor they are able to go in harmony with others in personal or professional life. So, in today's scenario controlling the mind is of utmost importance. Most of the domestic violence are the result are result of greed and materialistic ambitions. So, salute to the pioneer sage *Acharya Vagbhata* for highlighting this in the introductory verse. It is our ignorance that we are not able to value the importance of the verse.

He elaborates on the context saying about the main etiological factor responsible for all diseases, That is insufficient union (*Hinayoga*), perverted union (*Mithyayoga*) or Excessive union (*Atiyoga*) of *kala* (Time), *Artha* (Object of senses) and *Karma* (Deed of person).<sup>17</sup> The misdeeds committed by the body, speech and mind constitute the intellectual error (*Pragyaparadha*).<sup>18</sup> Intellectual error (*Pragyaparadha*) refers to misdeeds of a person due to deviation from normalcy (*Vibramsa*) of *Dhi* (Intelligence), *Dhriti* (Righteousness) and Memory (*Smriti*). The deviation of '*Dhi*' from normalcy results in the misinterpretation of knowledge which leads to the judgement of the beneficial as non-beneficial and vice-versa. *Dhritibramsha* leads to inability to divert the mind and senses from undesirable objects. Overpowering of the *Manas* with *Rajas* and *Tamas* leads to degradation of memory. It results in forgetfulness of decisions and actions taken by *Dhi*. Almost all diseases affecting the body leave their mark on the mind and vice-versa. The somatic impact of psychological diseases set the example of psychosomatic diseases. Now many of the auto-immune diseases and neoplasms are now known to be having its root in mind. Human minds possess three qualities, they are *Sattva*, *Rajas* and *Tamas*.<sup>19</sup> *Satvva Guna* represents purity, knowledge and happiness. *Rajas* symbolises lust, anger, pride, aversion and action. *Tamas* is indicative of fear, inertia, ignorance and confusion. *Rajas* and *Tamas* are susceptible to be vitiated and hence known as pollutants of the mind (*Manodoshas*). When the *Manodoshas* rule the intellect, it leads to various mental disorders. Various ancient classical texts discuss the role of mind and diseases about at least 2-3

millennia ago. This led to the various techniques for the control of mind.

It has been found that there is a relationship between Depression and Myocardial infarction as higher levels of depression and severe depression are associated with higher Morbidity and Mortality due to Cardiac events which are mainly caused by Arrhythmia.<sup>20</sup>

Anger is described as an intense feeling in response to feeling frustrated, hurt, disappointed, or threatened. Excess Anger serves as a base for many Somatic Diseases like Heart diseases (Kam,2009). According to Harry Mills, Anger is not an emotion we are born with, rather one that is learned. (2005). Numerous studies have been conducted on how anger impacts us physiologically and psychologically. It is said to affect brain first as it is the internal alarm system. It signals to other parts of the body when we are happy, sad, angry, in pain etc. When a person experiences anger, brain triggers the release of adrenalin, stress hormones etc which increases responsiveness and resulting in increased secretion of glucose into the blood stream in order to respond faster and make quick decisions. Anger is also said to secrete chemicals that increase heart rate and blood pressure.<sup>21</sup>

Positive psychological aspect of well-being - include positive emotion, optimism and life satisfaction are increasingly considered to have protective roles for cardiovascular disease (CVD) and longevity. Decades of research have documented the role of negative psychological factors including depression, anxiety and hostility in the development and progression of cardiovascular disease.<sup>22</sup>

According to a study done by Roest A.M et al (2017) Fear disorders are more strongly related to the development of heart disease than distress disorders.<sup>23</sup> He who does his duty without expecting the fruit of his actions is said to be a *yogi*. The mind is said to be very unsteady turbulent, tenacious and powerful, therefore it is difficult to control as the wind. Even though the mind is restless no doubt and difficult to curb, it can be brought under control by repeated practice of meditation and by exercise of dispassion.

<sup>24</sup>

## CONCLUSION

There is an intricate connection between mind and body in health and disease. People generally do not realise the importance of mind in health and disease. It is very important to control our mind and emotions to be healthy. As per Ayurveda there are *Dharaneeya Vega* which includes certain impulses of the mind which should be controlled to stay healthy.

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