



## MULTI-LEVEL INTERPRETATION, UNDERSTANDING, AND APPLICATION OF THE VERSE -"YOGADAPI VISHAM TEEKSHNAM UTTAMAM BHESHAJAM BHAVET, BHESHAJAM CHAPI DURYUKTAM TEEKSHNAM SAMPADYATE VISHAM"- A THEORETICAL REVIEW.

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## ABSTRACT

Being the oldest and most mystic among the various systems of medicine around the world, Ayurveda always had been the source of knowledge and wisdom for centuries. Even though ayurveda has been enriching the Indian culture uninterruptedly with untainted and deepest secrets of medicine for centuries, the surge of knowledge and wisdom seems to be never-ending. All the valuable knowledge and wisdom recorded in the classical texts imparted by this science has been handed down through generations. Ayurvedic literature whether it be *Samhitas* or *Nighantus* contributed by various acharyas helps to broaden our thought and view science from a different point of perspective. Ayurveda has regarded *aptopadesha* as a means to attain knowledge and it has indeed become the foundation for science when it comes to various contexts. Along with *aptopadesha*, raging research in the field has taken ayurveda to a whole new level of understanding and global acceptance. With the application of theoreti-

cal and literary research on the ayurvedic literatures, various concepts that could relate to different practical levels can be revealed. *Charaka Samhita* with its fascinating way of writing, explanation, and conceptualization has proved to be one of the best examples to apprehend literary/ theoretical research in ayurveda. This article is mainly intended to focus on a verse from the treatise " *Charaka Samhita*"- *Sutrasthana*, chapter one and to understand the various levels of interpreting the verse and its application to understanding the importance of various contexts.

**Keywords:** *Aptopadesha, Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana, Theoretical research, Nighantu, Matra*

## INTRODUCTION

The Indigenous medicinal system of ayurveda had always been an integral part of the Indian culture since the Vedic era. The core of the medicinal system of ayurveda has always focused on maintaining the health of a healthy individual and overcoming the diseased state of an unhealthy individual. The science of ayurveda has driven itself through instinct, insight, and keen observation of human behavior and behavior enabling the science to cover all aspects of human health -physical, mental, spiritual, and emotional.

Research is a journey between 2 points, one point is known and the other is unknown. Many disciplines have defined research as it is a careful investigation or enquiry, especially through science in the search for new facts in any branch of science(1). Research is a concept that was innate in ayurvedic literature and could very well have been the spark of modern-day medicinal research(2). Acharya P.V Sharma defines the term *Anusandhana* (Research) as the study of the cause-and-effect relationship between the *Dravya, guna, and karma* after several observations and through verifiable examinations arriving at final conclusions(3). The theoretical research done on the fundamental principles mentioned in the ayurvedic literature can help shed light and understand the contextual meaning as the practical utility of the principle in current life situations.

Among the Mainstream ayurvedic literature available and utilized for the study of ayurveda, *Charaka Samhita* occupies a major portion in the understanding of the fundamentals as well as the practical utility of these principles in the treatment. The whole text of *Charaka Samhita* being divided into *chatushka and sthanas* helps to categorize and identify the fundamental principles and their utility in various contexts

and situations. *Bheshaja chatushka* of *Sutrasthana* in *Charaka Samhita* mainly deals with the *dravya* or drugs in general, their categorization, properties, need, and importance of their knowledge. Under the context of the importance and need for understanding the drug, Acharya charaka has described the verse "Yogadapi visham teekshnam uttamam bheshajam bhavet, bheshajam chapi duryuktam teekshnam sampadyate visham"(4). The Verse in the context of the chapter simply signifies the importance and need to know in detail about the drug and the importance of proper administration of the drug(5). The whole concept of application and interpretation of the inner understanding of the sloka in the *Samhita* is a typical example of the inclusion of *Hetvartha Tantrayukti* by the acharya.

### Aim of the study

To lay an insight on the verse – "Yogadapi visham teekshnam uttamam bheshajam bhavet, bheshajam chapi duryuktam teekshnam sampadyate visham" from *Charaka Samhita* *sutrasthana.1/126*-on the deeper meanings and multi-level interpretation and its application in various contexts

### Materials and Methods

The literary material related to the verse and the contexts to which it is being related is collected from authentic texts and reference books. All possible interpretations and understanding of the sloka will be checked with the authentic text and confirmed.

### Context of Nighantu

*Nighantu* are ayurvedic literatures that give us detailed information regarding the identity of the drug. *Nighantu* is defined as a glossary that contains synonyms, groups, Terms, or names of drugs, animals, minerals, or any other things that can be administered

either as food or medicine(6). *Nighantus* contain the description of drugs, herbs, or any other substances used in treatment. The description can generally include the basonym, synonym, *rasa panchaka*, and therapeutical effect of the drug. When it comes to the importance of studying and understanding *Nighantu*, the verse helps us to understand as well as highlights the need and necessity for the knowledge of *Nighantu*. *Raja Nighantu* quotes a person who doesn't have knowledge of *Nighantu* equal to a scholar who is ignorant of grammar and a warrior without a weapon(7). *Nighantus* helps us to understand more about a drug, its properties, and uses, without which a complete understanding of the drug is not possible. Without complete and proper understanding and knowledge of a drug, the usage and application of a drug becomes vague and puts into risk the health of the patient at. The verse and its understanding perfectly convey the situation as the verse says improper and vague usage of a drug can bring about the effect of poison in the drug.

#### **Context of Bhesaja guna / Drug qualities**

*Chikitsa Chatushpada* or the four legs of treatment refers to the main four factors that make the concept of treatment practical. According to ayurveda, the success and effectiveness of the treatment depend on the quality of the *padachatustaya* or the *chikitsa chatushpada* (8) *Dravya* is one among the *chikitsa chatushpada* which holds the most relevance as *dravya* itself represents the medication required for the treatment. In the context of *Prasastha bhesaja lakshana* as well as *bhesaja guna*, Acharya has specified the importance of various factors associated with the *dravya* like the *Matra* or dose, the *yogyata* or applicability. This can be specifically seen agreed upon by all the *brihatrayee*. (9). Two main factors that are associated with *dravya /Aushadha* that relates the most to this sloka include *Matra* and *Yogyatwa*. (10). While mentioning the *bhesajana guna* by *acharya Susruta*, along with *Yogyatwa* and *Matra*, *Acharya susruta* also added other qualities like *aglanikara* and *avikari* meaning those which do not give rise to any adverse effects or complications(11). The applicability of the verse "*Yogadapi visham teekshnam*—" em-

phasizes the importance of the selection and measurement of drugs for treatment.

#### **Context of Matra**

The term *Matra* when associated with the drugs indicates the dosage of the drug to be administered. *Matra* is one of the most important aspects of treatment as the success of the treatment itself relies upon the logical application of the drug in the prescribed dosage. *Acharya charaka* in *Charaka Samhita, vimana sthana*, 8<sup>th</sup> chapter during the explanation of *Charakokta bhesaja pareeksha vidhi* has explained the various factors to be considered during the selection and administration of drugs. In the context, he has included *Matra* or Drug dose as one of the examination factors(12), wherein he has specified that during the administration of the drug, the *Matra* or dosage of drugs is of prime importance, and it helps in determining the choice of drug in treatment. *Acharya Charka* in *Charaka Samhita, vimanasthana* in the context of *Matra* explains that a lower dose fails to produce a desired effect, while excessive dosage can lead to harmful effects(13). Classical texts have advised the usage of drugs that are extremely toxic in nature as well as drugs with extreme properties like *bhallataka*, *Kupilu*, *Chitraka*, *manashila*, etc, but the application and inclusion of these drugs in various drug formulations and disease treatments prove the concept that with proper logic and appropriate dosage, even drugs that have extreme properties can prove beneficial to the system. The applicability and understanding of the sloka "*Yogadapi visham teekshnam*---" emphasizes protecting health by strictly adhering to the dosage of a drug during treatment.

#### **Context of Dravya sodhana / Purification of Drugs**

Ayurveda has advocated and included the usage of medicinal drugs from different sources. The three main sources of drugs in this regard include Plant-based, animal-based, and mineral-based drugs. The drugs from these three sources are available in their crude and natural form which makes for the classification of these drugs into 2 main categories (i) Toxic (ii) Non-Toxic(14). Toxicity of the drugs can include a wide variety of factors that can potentially harm the

human body on consumption if not processed properly and purified therefore to promote and introduce their usage as medicine and for inclusion into other compound formulations, such drugs must be detoxified or purified before usage. *Dravya sodhana* or drug purification is defined as a process by which unwanted impurities are separated from the substance by various pharmaceutical methods like grinding washing etc.(15). Hence in the process of preparation of medicine as well as usage of such drugs, *dravya sodhana* or drug purification plays a major role. The concept of *dravya sodhana* highlights the necessity for purification and detoxification of toxic and corrosive principles and phytochemicals present within the drug which could potentially cause harm or adverse drug reaction on consumption. *Sodhana* is a prerequisite for all *rasa aushadhi* since the source of the drug is mineral origin and some *Kasthaushadhi* who has alkaloids and phytochemicals that are highly toxic, abrasive, or corrosive. *Sodhana* of the drug helps in its *sanghata bheda*, removing the *Dravya gata* and *Aushadha gata* dosha making it *marana upayogi* so that it will help in achieving the *guna vridhi* of the drug(16). The relevance, applicability, and understanding of the sloka "Yogadapi visham teekshnam---" emphasizes the fact that even poison or drugs having poisonous nature and principles can prove to be the best medicine when it is properly processed, purified, and deprived of their poisonous or toxic constituents, and at the same time, Even the best drug can be rendered useless, harmful, fatal if it is not used properly administered and processed.

### **Context of Pharmacovigilance**

Pharmacology in general refers to the study of drugs, when it comes to the study of the effect of drugs on the body, various branches of pharmacology provide more insight. The therapeutical effect of the drugs and its associated factors are dealt with in detail in pharmacotherapeutics where the mode of drug action is studied in detail and adverse unwanted effects of the drug and its associated implications on health are studied and dealt with in detail in Pharmacovigilance. According to WHO, Pharmacovigilance is defined as the science and activities relating to the detection,

assessment, understanding, and prevention of adverse effects or any other drug-related problems(17). Pharmacovigilance plays a major role in ensuring that doctors and patients have enough information to decide when it comes to choosing a drug for treatment(18). In order to prevent or reduce harm to patients and thus improve public health, mechanisms for evaluating, monitoring, and ensuring the safety of medicines in clinical trials are vital. The Relevance, applicability, and understanding of the sloka "Yogadapi visham teekshnam---" emphasizes the importance of in-depth knowledge of both medicines and their adverse effect for logical usage. To prevent any adverse reaction or unwanted reaction towards the drug, the drug selected for the study must be properly assessed and understood which increases the chances of the drug being useful. It emphasizes the necessity of giving priority to understanding the properties, action potential, and secondary metabolites of the drug for successful treatment even for drugs that are included under the group of toxics, poisonous, and mineral drugs.

### **Context of *Abheshaja***

In the context of the classification of *dravya*, *Acharya charaka* has classified *dravya* on the basis of *prabhava* into 3, namely *Doshaprashamana*( Drugs that can alleviate the vitiated doshas), *Dhatupradushana*(Drugs that can vitiate the doshas) and *Swasthasya Urjaskara*( Drugs that maintain the health of a healthy person).In *Charka Samhita, chikitsa sthana* has elaborated in detail regarding *Rasayana* in four sub chapters, going through the chapters *acharya* has included the second group of the drug in this regard "*dhatu pradhushana*" in the name of "Abheshaja"(19). In the context of *Abheshaja*(Drugs that cause adverse effects), he has classified them into further 2 classes (i) *Badhanam* (Drugs that causes adverse effects immediately after intake) (ii) *Sanubadhanam* (Drugs that causes adverse effects after constant usage for a long time). *Sanubadhanam* can in turn be considered cumulative toxicity where a drug with toxic or corrosive properties used beyond the prescribed usage period can induce drug toxicity within the body. As an example, to the specificity in



drug duration, in *charaka chikitsa sthana*, Acharya has explained *rasayana* formulations like *bhallataka rasayana* and *vardhamana pippali rasayana* wherein he has strictly adhered to the rules and regulations regarding the days of usage of the drug and precautions to be maintained during its intake(20). The relevance, applicability, and understanding of the sloka "Yogadapi visham teekshnam---" emphasizes the knowledge of the physician regarding the time period for which the drug has to be administered for the patient to prevent any kind of adverse effects. Even though Rasayana formulations like *bhallataka rasayana* and *vardhamana pippali rasayana* include the usage of drugs with *teekshna* and *ushna guna* or properties, proper administration of the drugs in the prescribed form and for the prescribed duration can bring about health benefits in the patient. On the other hand, even though these drugs are included under rasayana medications they can prove to be harmful and toxic if administered without following the prescription advice and without considering the duration of drug administration.

#### Context of Vaidya / Physician

Vaidya or physician is the first among the *chikitsa chatuspada* or the four pillars of treatment mentioned by the acharyas. *Brihatrayi* has in detail mentioned the qualities that need to be possessed to be an able Vaidya. In *Charaka Samhita*, Acharya has specifically mentioned Bhishak / Vaidya / Physician as Karana(21). Among the various qualities of the Vaidya mentioned, acharya has included the quality of *shastrartha* / Theoretical knowledge, which includes the knowledge in detail about various drugs, their properties as well as where and when to administer the drugs for effective treatment outcomes. A physician or Vaidya who doesn't have a thorough knowledge of drugs and treatment is considered by *acharya charaka* as *Rogabhisara* Vaidya (Physician who is the companion of diseases and destroyer of life)(22). The relevance, applicability, and understanding of the sloka "Yogadapi visham teekshnam---" emphasizes the need to know the science of ayurveda in detail, the theoretical and practical knowledge, and the application of the principles in treatment. On the contra-

ry, with improper and incomplete knowledge of drugs, treatment, and diseases, even the most effective medicine can prove to be poison in the hands of a physician that lacks the said properties.

#### CONCLUSION

Ayurveda is a science that has concepts and theories intertwined in such a manner that the inner meaning of a single concept can open our minds to understanding various other principles and contexts mentioned in various places throughout the science. Even though the discussed sloka verse was mentioned in a single context, the inner meaning of the sloka with the help of *Tantrayukti* helped to identify where all the sloka or the verse can be applied to understand their meaning and broaden our ayurvedic perspective.

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