



A CRITICAL REVIEW ON CORRELATION BETWEEN AACHARA RASAYANA AND ASHTANGA YOGA W.S.R. MENTAL HEALTH

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ABSTRACT:

Background: In recent times mental health has become a burning topic in society. In past, people were mostly affected with *sharirika vikara* compared to *manasika vikara*, but with new times come new challenges, mental health being one of them. **Aim:** To understand the importance of *Aachara Rasayana* in managing mental health **Objective:** To analyse *ashtanga yoga* with accordance to *Aachara Rasayana*. **Material & methods:** *Charaka Samhita* would be considered for understanding the *Aachara Rasayana*. Text related to mental health data is collected from WHO, pubmed, etc. database. Other relevant text and terms will be collected from *ayurvedic* text & *yoga* text. **Discussion:** when it comes to managing mental health, *ayurveda* paves the best preventive management in the form of *Aachara Rasayana*. *Aachara Rasayan* is mentioned by *Acharya Charaka* & mentioned in the *rasayana pada*, which consist of all the do's & don'ts for an individual. These dos & don'ts can be categorized under the terms of *ashtanga yoga*. **Conclusion:** When we study *Samhita's*, we are always blinded by the *vyadhis* which are mostly *sharirika* in comparison to *mansika vikara*. A very limited information is obtained for maintaining *manasika vikara* (mental health), but that too is hidden behind the words. Key to mental health like other *vyadhi's* is hidden somewhere in *Aachara Rasayan*. Even though *yoga* is something which we approach for promoting well-being, awareness regarding *aachara rasayan* should be incorporated in people lives.

Keywords: *aachara rasayan, ashtanga yoga, manasikavikara, mental health*

INTRODUCTION

Need of study

In this time many people have accepted and talk about mental health. More than any physical disease, mental illness has pretty much become a common household problem.

The *Ayurvedic Rasayana* therapy has emerged to provide the benefits in delaying aging by inhibiting the functional decline in various body tissues that are associated with aging which basically includes intake of *dravyabhoota rasyana yoga* which are 63 in number such as, *brahma rasayan*, *chayavanaprash*, *haritakyadi yoga*, *triphalarasayana*, etc. out of which *Aachara Rasayana* is much closer to concept of *adravyabhoota chikitsa* with exception of intake of *ksheera & ghruta*.

With the pandemic far behind us and life returning to normal, we would have thought that stress levels would reduce but unfortunately, that is not the case. Stress is still a problem for Indians, according to a poll done among 10,000+ Indians to find out how they are coping with COVID-19 and whether their stress levels have gone up or down. Since 2021, the proportion of individuals experiencing stress has increased generally [1].

26% of Indians are stressed about their jobs, and 17% are stressed about their money. Relationship issues are the cause of 14% of stress. The modern workplace is stressful because of the long hours, unstable employment, low pay, and intense competition. People are unable to handle the situation or

come up with solutions. This has caused lots of stress and anxiety[2].

Increasing uncertainty is causing heightened stress levels, which can be managed through a balanced diet, lifestyle adjustments, and adequate sleep. Preventive healthcare represents the future and offers the most sustainable solution, especially given the strain on India's healthcare system. Mental health and stress significantly influence physical well-being and overall quality of life, underscoring the importance of addressing these issues promptly through a healthy, holistic approach to life.

According to a survey conducted in India in May 2022, 50 percent of respondents in the 24 to 34 age group stated that they were feeling more stressed or anxious during past 12 months. In the same survey 28 percent of respondents in the 16 to 24 age group stated that they experienced the same level of stress and anxiety as before [3].

Additionally, the WHO has identified loneliness as a serious hazard to world health. A study found that loneliness in older persons is linked to a 50% higher risk of dementia and a 30% higher risk of stroke or coronary heart disease [4].

Material and methods

The ayurvedic text was mainly taken from *Charaka Samhita* and studied for understanding the concept of *rasayana* and *Aachara Rasayana*. *Sutrastahana* was analysed for obtaining the insight of *manas vikara* and its various *chikitsa sutra* in terms of *trivarga & satvajay*. *Patanjali*

yogasutra was reviewed for interpretation of *ashtanga yoga*. Various search engines such as google scholar, google, pubmed, Ayurveda Research Portal were searched using keywords such as *manas vikara*, mental health, *ashtanga yoga*, *Aachara Rasayana*.

LITERARY REVIEW

Understanding *Aachara Rasayana*

Rasayana is a vital part of ayurveda which is basically understood as rejuvenating therapy. Simply saying *rasayan* is *rasa* + *aayan* i.e., inculcation of *rasa* in the body. *Rasayana* basically refers to nourishment at every stage, from the macro to the micro cellular level. *Rasayana* therapy helps the body restore its essential fluids, strengthen the immune system, and increase *ojas*, or the vital energy of life, all of which assist in fighting off disease and the negative consequences of aging. *Rasayana* restores *Rasadhatu* to normalcy, keeping other *dhatu*s (body tissues) in balance for an extended amount of time. This kind of enhanced nutrition might be considered as *vayasthapana*, as it prevents aging. *Aachara Rasayana* is a concept from *Ayurveda*, specifically mentioned by *Acharya Charaka* in the *Rasayana chaturtha Pada*, which focuses on behavioural and lifestyle guidelines rather than specific medicinal formulations. The term "*Aachara*" refers to conduct or behaviour, and "*Rasayana*" denotes a rejuvenative therapy aimed at promoting longevity, vitality, and overall well-being. which are:

Sathyavadinam (being truthful), *Akrodham* (anger free), *Nivriitha Madhya* (avoiding alcohol), *Nivriitha Maithuna* (following celibacy), *Ahimsa* (free from violence), *Anayasam* (be relaxed) & *Prashantham* (stay calm), *Priya Vadinam* (having pleasant talks), *Japa Nithyam* (offering daily prayers), *Shoucha Nithyam* (maintaining hygiene), *Dheeram* (having courage), *Tapasvinam* (performing meditation), *Deva Go Brahmana Acharya Guru Vriddha Archaneratham* (worshipping), *Anrishamsya Param Nithyam* (being loving and compassionate), *Nithyam Karuna Vedinam* (being kind), *Sama Jagarana Swapnam* (having balanced sleep habits), *Nithyam Ksheera Ghrita Ashanam* (consuming milk & ghee daily), *Desha Kala Pramananjam* (awareness of time and place), *Yukthiknjam* (logical inventiveness), and *Anankritham* (egolessness), *Shastha Aacharam Asankeernam* (simplicity), *Adhyatma Pravanendriyam* (sensory organs oriented), *Upasana for Vrudhanam Asthikanam Jithatmanam* (companion of the elderly, the religious, and self-restraining individuals), and *Dharma Sastra Param* (devoted to holy texts) [5].

Understanding *ashtanga yoga* [6]

The purpose of yoga is "*Yoga Chitta vrittinirodha*" it means cessation of mental modification.

Eight limbs are as follows-

- *Yama* (Abstinences)
- *Niyama* (behaviours)
- *Asana* (posture)
- *Pranayama* (breathing technique)
- *Pratyahara* (abstraction)
- *Dharana* (concentration)
- *Dhyana* (meditation)
- *Samadhi* (Fusion of mind and body)

Yama's (Abstinences) and *Niyama's* (observances) are the foundational pillars where individuals can learn and understand the ethical code of conduct of life, which help an individual to become an awakened person.

Yama has five pillars:

1. *Ahimsa* (Non-violence)
 2. *Satya* (truthfulness)
 3. *Asteya* (Non-Stealing)
 4. *Aparigraha* (non-possession) means one should not have more than is required.
 5. The last part of *Yama* is *Brahmacharya* (celibacy) which means one has to be in self-control for securing harmony in the impulses.
- The next limb (Anga) is *Niyama* (behaviours) it also includes five parts.
- 1-*Souch* (cleanliness): means maintaining the holistic purity of the body, mind, and speech.
 - 2-*Santosh* (contentment): means contentment, acceptance of one's circumstance and also of others. when one understands and accepts the reality of the situation.
 - 3- *Tapas* (discipline): means self-discipline and perseverance,
 - 4-*Swadhyaya* (self-analysis)

5-*Ishwar-pranidhana* (surrendering to a higher power):

Concepts in mental health [7]

Mental health is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their community. It is an integral component of health and well-being that underpins our individual and collective abilities to make decisions, build relationships and shape the world we live in. Mental health is a basic human right. And it is crucial to personal, community and socio-economic development.

Mental health is more than the absence of mental disorders. It exists on a complex continuum, which is experienced differently from one person to the next, with varying degrees of difficulty and distress and potentially very different social and clinical outcomes.

Mental health conditions include mental disorders and psychosocial disabilities as well as other mental states associated with significant distress, impairment in functioning, or risk of self-harm. People with mental health conditions are more likely to experience lower levels of mental well-being, but this is not always or necessarily the case.

In present times, depression, loneliness, stress, anxiety can be considered as the emerging mental health issue.

References in the Samhita for manas vikara

In charaka Samhita following references can be obtained regarding *manas vikara*:

1. *Chikitsa sutra* of *manasaroga* is stated as “*mansogyanvigyanadhairya smriti samadhi*” [8].

2. *Pragyaapradha* is the sole reason of *manas vikara* i.e., *ishrya*(envy), *shoka*(grief), *bhaya*(fear), *krodha*(anger), *ahmkar* & *dvesha* [9].

3. *Manas roga* are “caused by non- fulfilment of desires and facing of the undesired” [10].

4. For a person suffering from *manas roga*, he should avoid *ahitkara* & indulge in *hitkarkarya* in accordance to *dharma*, *Artha* & *kama* as *sukha* & *dukha* cannot take place without the involvement of these three i.e., *dharma*, *Artha* & *kama*. And hence it should be practised. He should practise & indulge in *atmagyan*, *deshagyan*, *kulagyan*, *kalagyan*, *balagyan* & *shaktigyan*. It can be summarized as following & practising the *trivarga* (*dharma*, *Artha*, *kama*) along with *atmadigyan* of oneself [11].

5. There are three types of *aushadhi*., *daivavyaprashaya*, *yuktivyaprashaya*, & *satvajaya*.

Satvajaya is understood as the restraining of the mind from *ahitkara* objects [12].

Acharya Charaka has also mentioned the concept of *yoga*.

According to him, *sharir* & *mana* are the *adhithan* of *vedana*. All *vedana* (sensations) cease to exist in the state of *yoga* & *moksha*. In *moksha*, cessation is complete while *yoga* leads to that [13].

There was study conducted among the students of *Ayurveda*, who are aware of *Aachara Rasayana* are practising it and up to what extent; and secondly to establish an interrelation of

Aachara Rasayana on their physical-mental health and effect on academic performance as well as social behaviour done based an objective questionnaire in a single blind method. On the basis of answered questionnaire, the students were categorized into three groups viz; Poorly following, moderately following and strongly following *Aachara Rasayana*. Students were also assessed on various observations like health status, academic performance, attendance, participation in co- curricular and extracurricular activities, behaviour with teachers and peers. Out of 66 students, 17 who strongly followed *Aachara Rasayana* were good at academics, enjoying good physical and mental health and friendly reputation among peers. 36 students following moderate *Aachara Rasayana* had variability and were enjoying satisfactory to good physical and mental health, minor health problems, intermittent stress and didn't have healthy peer relation. 13 students poorly followed *Aachara Rasayana* were comparatively slow learners and had low attendance [14].

DISCUSSION

Charaka Samhita was studied for understand *manas vikara* & *Aachara Rasayana* and logically explained the *manas vikara* long with its treatment. *Manas vikara* are, *ishrya* (envy), *shoka* (grief), *bhaya* (fear), *krodha* (anger), *ahmkar* & *dvesha* caused due to *pragyaapradha*. *Pragyaapradha* can be understood as the *nidaan* of *manas vikara* which also act as etiological factor in *sharirika vikara*. To treat this *gyan*,

vigyan, dhairya, smriti & samadhi has been stated. *Satvajaya* understood as the restraining of the mind from *ahitkara* objects could also be used to treat our inner well-being.

In *Patanjali yog sutra*, *ashtanaga yoga* are explained to attained the stage of samadhi. *Aachara rasayana* could be collected under the

following terms of *ashtanga yoga* i.e., *yama & niyama* mainly in table 1.

Although *Aachara Rasayana* cannot be completely correlated with the *ashtanga yoga*, but still few such as *yama and niyama* can be studied and understood under these terms.

Table 1. inculcation of *Aachara Rasayana* in *ashtanga yoga*

Sr.no.	Ashtanga yoga	Aaachara rasayana
1.Yama	<i>Ahimsa</i> <i>Satya</i> <i>Asteya</i> <i>Aparigraha</i> <i>Brahmacharya</i>	<i>Akrodha, ahimsak, anrishansya</i> <i>Satyavadina, karuna vedina</i> <i>Anayasa, dananitya</i> <i>Nivritamadya-maithuna, Sama Jagarana Swapnam</i>
2.niyama	<i>Shouch</i> <i>Santosh bahayantara</i> <i>Tapa</i> <i>Swadhyaya</i> <i>Ishwar pranidhana</i>	<i>Shouch, Priya Vadinam</i> <i>Dheera, & Prashantham</i> <i>Tapasveena, Adhyatma Pravanendriyam</i> <i>Japa</i> <i>Deva Go Brahmana Acharya Guru Vriddha</i> <i>Archaneratham, Upasana for Vridhanam</i> <i>Asthikanam Jithatmanam</i>
3.	<i>Asana</i>	
4.	<i>Pranayama</i>	
5.	<i>Pratyahara</i> } connecting link b/w both	
6.	<i>Dharna</i>	
7.	<i>Dhyana</i>	
8.	<i>Samadhi</i>	

There is one study obtained which has showed the importance and awareness of *Aachara Rasayana* among 66 BAMS students. The result seems to be pretty much positive in maintaining

a both physical as well as mental health of student. But no other research studies were obtained except this which show the importance of *Aachara Rasayana*.

CONCLUSION

In short, *Aachara Rasayan* can help us both in maintaining physical health as well as mental health along with paving a pathway for attaining samadhi through ashtanga yoga.

According to *Samkhya-Yoga* philosophy, everything pre-exists in its cause (*karana-karya Siddhant*). It means that we have the capacity in ourselves that needs to be manifested.

Therefore, for approaching the prevention & management of *manas vikara*, the solution resides in oneself. After studying *Aachara Rasayana*, it is concluded as a vital step in preventing manas vikara. In *sutrasthana*, various line of treatment of *manas vikara* are mentioned which is collectively understood as the *gyan, vigyan, dhairya, smriti & samadhi*. Or in simple terms, restraining of the mind from *ahitkara* objects.

To prevent this *pragyapradha*, *Acharya Rasayana* is the probable choice because it is all about how should be one's behaviour and behave accordingly.

Also, *Acharya Charaka* has a distinct Psychosomatic approach of *deha -manasa* which does not appear in other *samhita*'s. as per sutra of "*swasthasyaswasthlakshan*", emphasis has always been put on maintaining a good health. And *Aachara Rasayana* is definitely the stepping stone towards this. Maximum part of the *Acharya Rasayan* can be covered under the *yama & niyama* of ashtanga yoga. Yoga is "*chittavrittinirodha*" i.e., to arrest the activities of *chitta*.

We need to prevent *manas vikara* because evidence is available where *manas vikara* act as the etiological factor for *sharirikavikara*, and vice versa.

Yoga has already established itself in curing the mental health problems. This review helps us to remind how to treat *manas vikara* with reference to *Samhita*. And how yoga and the concepts of charaka are similar in someways.

Also there has been not much studies related the clinical aspect of *Aachara Rasayana* although a lot review articles regarding its role in stress, mental health & ageing etc were obtained.

Clinical studies can also be conducted to emphasise the *Aachara Rasayana*. No clinical research was found regarding its implication to impose its evidence-based research.

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