

Clinical significance of correlation of *rasa vikalpa* and *dosha vikalpa siddhantas* in ayurveda

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Abstract

Literary review reveals the greater significance of the correlation of *Rasa vikalpa* (Combinations of rasa) and *Doshavikalpa* (Combinations of dosha) theories in clinical practice. The physician, for effective treatment, should have clear understanding on the correlation of *Dravya* (material) and humours at the level of *Pancha Maha Bhuta* (PMB) constitution. The Homogenous factors of materials and humours result in the increase of particular humour and heterogeneous factors induce antagonistic effect against the humours. However, due to its complicated nature of calculation, the computer programme may be applicable for determination of correlation between two theories. The data of the programme will offer number of benefits to the physicians and future researchers. It would provide a systematic base for the general physician or researcher who would otherwise not been able to cope up with such determination in his general cognitive skills. Furthermore, this work will lead the entire field of Ayurveda with the assistance of advance information technology to enter into a new era.

KEY WORDS: *Rasa vikalpa, Dosa vikalpa*

Introduction

The *Rasa Vikalpa* and the *Dosha Vikalpa* are important philosophical *Siddhanthas* in Ayurveda. These two *Siddhanthas* are applicable in clinical aspects of therapeutic fields in Ayurveda. In fact, the awareness of correlation of *Rasa Vikalpa* and *Dosha Vikalpa* is of grater significance in clinical aspect. The ancient sages emphasised that each *Rasa* or their various combinations will act to subside the pathology caused by one or more combinations of *Tridosha*. However, the correlation of *Rasa vikalpa* and *Dosa vikalpa* has neither been elaborated in detail in Ayurveda-classics nor has been considered for systematic study. Therefore systematic research based study on these *Siddhanthas* and their application would undoubtedly contribute towards the further development of *dravyaguna vgyana* and therapeutic fields in Ayurveda.

Caraka mentioned that if a physician is skilful possessing knowledge of the *Dosha Vikalpa* and the *Rasa Vikalpa*, he or she doesn't need to learn more to ensure the success to cure the ailments. *Susruta* too referred these two hypotheses of *Rasa Vikalpa* and *Dosha Vikalpa* highlighting the greater significance of the knowledge of *Dosha Vikalpa* and *Rasa Vikalpa* during clinical application. On the basis of such references in Ayurvedic classics it is possible to form a hypothesis for extensive analysis on correlation between *Rasa vikalpa* and *Dosha vikalpa*.

Such an extensive analysis would include the comprehensive literary review of *Caraka Samhita* and *Susruta Samhita*.

Evolution of *Panchamahabhutha*

According to both *Caraka* and *Susruta* Ayurveda accepts the Vedic view of Microcosm and Macrocosm, which are identical in that the Man is the miniature of Nature. Ayurveda believes that the earth, along with its animate and inanimate things, is a result of set order of evolution. Reviews of Indian philosophies confirm both evolution and involution. The order of evolution is *Akasa-Vayu-Agni-Apa-Prthvi*. The origin of everything depends upon these five proto elements (*Pancha Mahabhuta*). *Akasa* gives rise to *Vayu* and is also involved in it. Also, *Vayu* gives rise to *Agni* and *Agni* to *Apa*. Through the progressive intrusion, the *Akasa* or *Nabha*, *Vayu*, and *Agni* are involved in *Apa*. *Apa* gives rise to *Prthvi* accordingly. Thus the evolution of these *Mahabhuta* takes place. The *Panchamahabhuta* (five proto elements) are the five basic elements (*Karana Dravya*), which permute and combine to cause many substances (*Karya Dravya*).

Food is nothing but the repository of the body constituents. Everything in the universe is made of the "*Panchamahabhuta*". It is the specific and particular permutation and combination of these *Mahabhuta* that many and different living and non-living things appear.

Rasa is the object of the gustatory sense organ, which is located in the tongue, but it is not only perception of taste which is an indicator of the composition, properties and probable action of the drug. The term "*Rasa*" has different meanings and definitions. Here we are concerned with the definition of *Rasa* which represents the taste to be perceived by the tongue.

Evolution of *Rasa* is the combination of the *Pancha Mahabhuta*. The primary *Mahabhuta* for *Rasa* evolution is the "*Apa*" *Mahabhuta*. The other four *Mahabhuta* evolve six types of *Rasa*. The initial combination of the *Mahabhuta* took place in the order of evolution. The preponderance of two *Mahabhutas* gives rise to one *Rasa*. *Rasa* is a quality of the substances and the quality of the *Mahabhuta* of the substances:

There are sixty-three folds or combination patterns of six *Rasa* (tastes) depending upon the variation of the nature of the substance, location and time. These sixty-three combination patterns can be categorized as follows:

A. Without any combination	(6)
B. The combination of two <i>Rasa</i>	(15)
C. The combination of three <i>Rasa</i>	(20)
D. The combination of four <i>Rasa</i>	(15)
E. The combination of five <i>Rasa</i>	(6)
F. The combination of all six <i>Rasa</i> (1)	

In this manner the taste combinations are divided into sixty-three categories. This number of sixty-three will swell into an innumerable figure if the after-tastes (*Anu-rasa*) are taken into account. Further if the comparative and superlative degrees of tastes are taken into consideration the sum goes beyond computation. Thus the ancient *Acaryas*, for the practical purposes, compromised on the fact that the number of combination of *Rasa* confined to sixty-three which consist of fifty-seven combine *vikalpa* and six individual types.

The cycle of evolution represents the correlation of *Rasa* with the *dosha* at the physiological level so that the body may function harmoniously in its totality.

Apart from *Rasa vikalpa*, *Dosha vikalpa* should be considered in detail in such clinical application. The *Pancha Mahabhutas* achieved the biological form in *Tridosha* and six *Rasa* are recognized as the substances subscribing the formation of the *Tridosha*. The role of *agni* in the body is to turn

molecular properties or *Rasa* of substances into biological properties or *Tridosha*. The *Pancha Mahabhuta* (non-living five elements), so combined by certain chemical reactions into these biological substances give rise to *Tridosha*. The origin and promotion of the *Dosha* are understood on the basis of the *Rasa* and elements that compose them. The numbers of *dosha* accepted by all ancient *Acarya* are three, which are *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*.

Each humour (*Dosha*) has its primary qualities and its respective site in the body. When aggravated, the *Doshas* (humours) give rise to various symptoms and diseases. Therefore sixty-two discordant conditions of humours or the 61 *Dosha Vikalpa* are described by the ancient *Acaryas* as follows:

- A. 13 conditions of Tri-discordant with the increase of morbid humours.
- B. 8 conditions of Bi-discordant with the increase of morbid humours.
- C. 3 conditions of Mono-discordant with the increase of morbid humour.

All these discordances with morbid increase of humours make twenty-five (25) conditions.

- D. Accordingly, the diminution of humours will make another twenty-five types of discordant conditions, which all together form into fifty conditions.
- E. Further there are 12 types of mixed discordant conditions grouped into three, making the total of 62 conditions.
- F. Thus with the normal *Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha* conditions all the *Dosha Vikalpa* fall into 63 types.

The taste (*Rasa*) is a major issue among the factors of provoking or pacifying the *Dosha*. Thus among the six tastes, particular sets of tastes initially involved in the increase or decrease of each *dosha* have been described in *Ayurveda* as follows:

- *Madhura*, *Amla* and *Lavana* *Rasa* increase *Kapha* and decrease *Vata*.
- *Katu*, *Tikta* and *Kashaya* increase *Vata* and decrease *Kapha*.
- The *Agneya* *Rasa* *Katu*, *Amla* and *Lavana* and *Saumya* *Rasa* *Madhura*, *Tikta* and *Kashaya* increase and decrease *Pitta* respectively.

Charaka emphasized that the interaction of tastes and humours, depending on the use of tastes (*Rasa*), which are mostly homogenous in quality to a particular humour (*Dosha*) augment that humour. Where as the use of the tastes, which are antagonistic in quality to a particular humour, will allay with that humour. It is in order to enable the understanding of this mode of operation that the hexaplicity of tastes and the triplicity of humours, are considered individually, that is uncombined with each other.

But above all, a statement of *Sushruta* highlights the procedure for understanding the application of *Cikitsa*: on the basis of *Panchamahabhuta* theory, as follows:

"Akasa etc. *Pancha Mahabhutas* are the *Karana dravya* for whole universe; and same for all *Karya dravya*, which are available on this earth. Human body is made of *Panchamahabhuta* and the drugs are also called *panchabhautic*. The nature of *Karana dravya* (*Panchamahabhuta*) produces the same nature of *Karya dravya* (Substance, and the human body). Therefore, there is nothing to consider, except the real understanding of applied therapeutic aspects of *Panchamahabhuta*". Therefore, the *Acaryas* emphasized that a physician, for effective treatment should understand the correlation of *dravya* and *dosha* at the level of the *Panchbhautic* constitution.

In other words, the proto-elements are the substances of atomic level, which are converted into substances of molecular level (*dravya*), chemical level (*rasa*) and biological level (*dosha*). Therefore all these factors have very obvious relationship with each other. Homogenous factors of *dravya*, and *dosha* will result in the cause the increase of particular *dosha*, and heterogeneous factors produce the antagonistic effect to *dosha*.

Thus, *Charaka* emphasized that the physician desirous of success, considering well the nature of disease, and the action of the remedy, should prescribe either a single taste (*Rasa*) or combination of multiple tastes (out of 63 *Vikalpa*), as required. Further according to him a physician, who is well aware of the classification of tastes as well as of the classification of morbid humours, will not fall into error regarding the aetiology, symptoms and remedial measures. At the same time, *Sushruta* too is in support of this theory but he further highlighted that if physician is a *Krtr*

(Subject), *Rasa* are the *Karana* (Instrument), *Dosha* are the *Karana* (Cause) and success in treatment is the *Karya* (Object), hence a good physician should be aware of the correlation of *Rasa Vikalpa* and *Dosha Vikalpa*.

Discussion

Literary review data from Ayurvedic classics and philosophies reveals the greater significance of *Rasa vikalpa* and *Dosha vikalpa* in clinical practice. Meanwhile it is a considerable fact that the application of these two theories without hesitation, because within general cognitive skills it is difficult to determine the entire interrelation between *Rasa vikalpa* and *Dosha vikalpa*. However due to complicate nature of understanding and calculation it is an extreme necessity to develop an easy method for verify relationship between two theories.

Different types of IT technologies have been developed in the modern area. Computer is one such equipment that could be used effectively due to advantages such as its accuracy and ability to deal with highly complex data handlings, mathematical calculations, statistical analysis and graphical displays at greater speed.

Conclusion

Accordingly a computer program would be important for the determination of correlation of these two theories. Such type of computer work offers a number of benefits to the physicians and future researchers. It would provide a systematic base for the general physician or researcher who would otherwise not be able to cope up with such determination in his general cognitive skills. Furthermore this type of effort will lead the entire field of Ayurveda with the assistance of advance information technology to enter into a new era.

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