



Review Article

CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF VATA DOSHA IN SUSHRUTA SAMHITA

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is the science of living beings which deal with maintenance of a healthy individual as well as removal of the diseases through which one can get the *Sukha* (happiness) and removal of *Dukha* (Miseries). There are three most auspicious books of Ayurveda or triad of *Charaka samhita*, *Sushruta samhita* and *Ashtanga hridaya* jointly known as *Brihatrayi*. *Sushruta samhita* is written by *Acharya sushruta (Vridhdha sushruta)*. *Sushruta* has compiled and collected all the speech of lord *Dhanvantari* in a systematic form which became the famous book of *Shalyatantra* as a *Sushruta samhita*. Ayurveda stands on its own basic pillars and concepts regarding *Doshas* are one of them. *Doshas* are responsible for physiological actions in the body manifested as health and pathologically manifested as disease specially *Vata dosha*. *Vatadoshas* etymology has been described in two forms, aetiologies, separate group of diseases under *Vatavyadhi*, six stages of *Kriyakala* according to *Vata dosha*, characteristics of *Vataprakriti* etc. have been innumerable and analysis regarding *Vata dosha* in available *Sushruta samhita* has been presented in this paper.

Key words: Ayurveda, *Sushruta samhita*, *Vatadosha*, Action, *Kriyakala*, *Prakopa*.

INTRODUCTION

Vridhdhasushruta or *Adhyasushruta* was the student of lord *Divodas* who is considered as original writer of *Saushrutatantra* nowadays famous as *Sushruta samhita*.¹ The time period of available *Sushruta samhita* is considered as tenth century which has four levels as written below–

1. *Vridhdhasushruta* (1000-1500 B.C) (original writer)
2. *Sushruta* (2nd A.D) (*Pratisamsakarta*)
3. *Nagarjuna* (5th A.D) (Added *Uttaratantra*)
4. *Chandrata* (10th A.D) (*Pathshuddhikarta*)²

Sushruta is considered as father of surgery and *Sushruta samhita* was popularized as a most practical book of that time. No living being is considered devoid of *Doshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*)³ and among all the three *Doshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*) the *Vata dosha* has been considered as prime or chief.⁴ *Vata dosha* is useful for the body or how does it affect the body has been told in detail in *Sushruta Samhita*. *Acharya Sushrutra* has told that human body is constituted of humors *Vata*, *Pitta* and *Kapha*⁵, which have been considered as primary and most essential factors

in situation of human organism and said that this *Vata dosha* is predominant in lower part of the body.⁶ The term *Vata* is derived from the root word "Va" with suffix "Ta" means *Gati* (to move) or *Gandhana* and has been told that there can be no organism without *Vata*.⁷ Term *Gandhana* explains various meanings i.e. continued, effort, perseverance, hurting, injury, killing, manifestation, information etc.⁸ A state of equilibrium of bodily humours (*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*) is one of the causative factor for health.⁹ *Sushruta* has considered the *Vata dosha* as prime or chief *Dosha* among all the three *Doshas* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*) also given separate chapter in *chikitsasthana* as "*Vata Vyadhi Chikitsa*" and "*Mahavatavyadhi chikitsa*".¹⁰

Characteristics of Vata dosha

The *Vata* is *Avyakta* means not perceived by *Chakhsurendriya*. It is manifested or known through its karma so called as "*Avyaktovyakta karma*". *Vata* has various property i.e. *Ruksha* (Non unctuous), coldness, lightness, *Khara* (roughness or coarse), *Ashukari* (immediate

action), *Achintyaveerya* *Orachintyashakti* (unimaginably powerful), *Tiryakgami* (move in an oblique direction), *Shabda* (sound), *Sparsa* (touch), *Rajogunabahula*, *Svayambhu* (self originated), *Muhuschari* (quick action).¹¹

Seats of Vatadosha: *Sroni* (pelvic region), *Guda* (anal region),¹² *Adhonabhi* (pelvic region), *Pakvadhana*, *Guda*¹³. *Acharya sushruta* has told that *Vayu* is single but it has been categorized into five due to its different names or sites or *Kriyas* (action) or the diseases. The names of all five types of *Vata* are *Prana*, *Udana*, *Vyana*, *Samana* and *Apana*. These all five perform their specific actions at their normal place naturally.¹⁴

Place and action of Prana vayu: *Prana vayu* courses (or governs) the cavity of the mouth, forces down the food into the stomach, assist different vitalizing principles of the body, generally helps for sustenance of the body. Derranged condition of this *Vayu* causes hiccough, dyspnoea, distemper.¹⁵

Place and action of Udanavayu: This *Vayu* is most important among all the vital *Vayu*. It courses (vibration) thus called *Udanavayu*. It produces speech, song, etc. It causes disease confined to regions lying above clavicles mostly.¹⁶

Place and action of Samana vayu: It courses (governs) the stomach and intestine. Its functions consist in digesting the chyme brought down into the intestines, in union with digestive ferment (*Agni*). It disintegrates its essence from its refuse, or excreted matters. Deranged *Samana vayu* causes dysentery, *Gulma* (fantom tumor) or indigestion.¹⁷

Place and action of Vyana Vayu: It performs its action via movement throughout the body and carries *Rasadhatu*. It helps outflow of blood and perspiration. It performs all five *Chestas* (actions) means all five muscular movement i.e. contraction, relaxation etc. Deranged condition of this *Vayu* causes the disease which occurs throughout the body mostly.¹⁸

Place and action of Apanavayu: Primarily it is located in large intestine region. It helps to pass the urine, semen, foetus, menstrual blood etc smoothly from the body. Deranged condition of this *Vayu* causes disease of *Basti* (urinary bladder) and *Guda* (anorectal region).¹⁹

General functions of Vata dosha: Normal *Vayu* maintains a state of equilibrium between different *Doshas*, *Dhatu*s and *Agni* thus it helps to maintain uniform state in metabolism of the body. This

Vayu moves throughout the body and in normal state all the *Kriyas* (actions) run smoothly.²⁰ The *Vata* causes existence, origin and death of living beings.²¹ *Prasbandana* (Importing of motion to the body) *Udvahana* (carrying of sensations of respective sense organ) *Purana* (passing down of food to its proper receptacles) *Viveka* (separation of excretions from assimilated food), *Dharana* (Retention and evacuation if urine and semen)²², increases the *Tejasa* of the body²³, causes growth of the foetus²⁴, helps the flesh to transform into muscle²⁵, *Vayu* is root cause of all the actions performed²⁶ and Causes pain in the body²⁷. The excess of the *Vayu* creates following features in the body which are roughness of the skin, emaciation of the body darkness of complexion, Trembling with tremour of the limb, willingness for heat or hot things, Insomnia, Fecal material becomes thick or consistency sees, Strength of the body decreases²⁸. *Kshaya* of *Vata* has been given as state of languor, shortening of speech, Uneasiness or absence of hilarity, Loss of consciousness.²⁹

Characteristics of Vataprakriti: Person will be wakeful, do not like cold and bathing, unsharp, thievish, vain, dishonest, loves music, sole and palm are much fissured, having rough, dry beard/moustache/fingers/nails/hairs, have short tempered, bites his fingers nails, grinds his teeth, Impatient, unsteady in his friendship, ungrateful, lean, rough, his body is marked with large number of prominent vein (*Dhamani*), Incoherent in his habit, vacillating temper, walks fast, sees himself flying in the sky during dream, His eyes moves always here and there, having unsteady mind, makes few friends, accumulates very little money, talks, incoherently. He resembles (In walking, moving etc.) the few animals as goat, jackal, hare, mouse, camel, dog, vulture, crow, an ass etc.³⁰

Causes of aggravation of the Vayu: Followings are the causes of aggravation of *Vayu* as mentioned by *Sushruta* as wrestling with wrestler of superior strength Excessive exercise, sexual intercourse, study, A headlong plunge into water, Leap from a inordinate height, running, violent pressing blow, leaping over a ditch, A boundary gait, swimming, late night sleeping, Carrying a heavy loads, Excessive riding, walking a long distance, taking food with pungent, astringent, bitter, Taking light articles, cool articles, Taking dried part herbs, *Vallura*, *Varaka*, *Uddalaka*, *Kordusa*, *Syamaka*, *Nivara*, *Mudga*, *Masura*, *Adhaki*, *Harenu*, *Kalayu*, *Nispava* etc. Fasting, unequal or irregular meals, over eating, voluntary

suppression of urine, semen and tears or of the mucous secretion of the nose as in coryza, a forced stoppage of defecation, eructation or sneezing.³¹ Pathological state of *Vata dosha* in the body have been clarified by *Acharyasushruta* as *Kriyakala* (Means Proper timing at which one can treat the disease easily) and he has told about six stages for the development of disease from *Vatadi doshas* which are *Sanchaya*, *Prakopa*, *Prasara*, *Sthansansraya*, *Vyakta*, *Bheda*.³² If the deranged humor *Vata* accumulates in its own site causes fullness and stuffedness of the abdomen or any of the viscera.³³ *Prakopa* of *Vatadosha* causes pricking pain in abdominal region or viscera and movement of *Vata* in this region occurs.³⁴ After *Prakopa* the *Vatadosa* expands and moves for spreading thus giving rise to swelling or distention of the abdomen as well as rumbling sound in the abdomen (intestine)³⁵. In fourth stage the *Vatadosa* lodges and affects that particular organ. For example *Gulma* etc. occurs.³⁶ In fifth stage of *Kriyakala* the *Vatadosha* causes *Atisara* (loose stool) etc. and after this If this condition persist for long duration then above mentioned diseases transfer into ulcer and will become incurable or difficult to cure. This is called as sixth *Kriyakala* or *bhedavastha*.³⁷ In *Sushruta samhita* two separate chapters have been given for the management of *Vatavyadhi* named as "*Vatavyadhi chikitsa*" and "*Mahavatavyadhi chikitsa*". Treatments have also been the given in scattered form in this book which are follows-The remedy proves efficacious in *Vataroga* through its heat making potency, powerful of salability and digesting the deranged *Doshas* and because of its special mode of preparation.³⁸ Common remedy have been mentioned i.e. application of *Sneha*, Fomentation, An ointment of the body, *Basti*, oily purgatives, *Sirobasti*, rubbing of oil on the head, oily fumigation, gargling with tepid oil, oily errhines, meat soup, milk, meat, clarified butter, oil and other lardaceous food, all kind of acid fruit, salt, lukewarm washes, gentle massage, saffron, *Agurupatra*, *Kustha*, *Ela*, *Tagar*, wearing of woolen, silken, cotton, thick garments, living in a warm rooms, not exposed to the wind, soft bed, baking in glary of fire, entire sexual abstinence, etc.³⁹ A specific remedy for the localized *Vatika* disorders have also been described i.e. for *Derrangedvayu* in *Amashaya* "*Shadadharana yoga*" have been told. ⁴⁰ Common preparation for *Vatika* disorders have also been mentioned i.e. *Salavana Upanaha*, *Tilvaka Ghrita*, *Anutaila*, *Sahasra Pakataila*, *Patralavana* (salt), *Kanda lavana*, *Kalyanakalavana*.⁴¹

DISCUSSION

Ayurveda which stands on its own basic concepts and the principles which are special mentioned in *Charaka samhita* and *Sushruta samhita*. In this *Sushruta samhita* the *Doshas* have been said as *Tristhuna* means as a three basic pillars in the living organism which are supportive of the body. As we know that *Doshas* are the active principles in the body which are responsible for normal physiological actions in the body. If *Doshas* are normal then body will remain healthy otherwise diseased. There have been two groups of *Doshas* first as active group and second as inactive group. Active group includes *Vata dosha* while inactive group have *Pitta* and *Kapha dosha*. Here the *Vata dosha* has been considered as chief or prime among all the three *Doshas* because of its active nature in comparison of others two *Doshas*. Chief function of the *Vata* has been told as *Vikshepa* means to throw or to project as the *Vayu* performs its actions in the universe. This process is only possible after having force, energy or the movement. In the support of the above *Acharya sushruta* has given two dimensional approach in the form of *Gati* (movement) and *Gandhana* (energy) as derivation of *Vata*. Prior to this *Samhita* there were no such type of concept regarding derivation of *Vata* has been found directly in others *Samhitas*. So all types of movement inside of the living body either in the form of blood circulation or contraction, relaxation of the body parts etc occur only due to *Vata*. In this *Samhita* it has also been clarified regarding the form of *Vata* and said that *Vatadosha* is *Avyakta* means which is cannot be perceive through *Indriyas* (sense organs) means it cannot be manifested. Further it has been stated that it is only manifested via the *Karma* (actions or functions), this supports the *Vata dosha* as a form of action component. There have been no reference found regarding *Anjali pramana* of the *Vata dosha* which also reflects its qualitative nature. Though *Vata* is present all over the body but specially in *Pakvashaya* (large intestine) so it affects each and every part of the body. *Guna* (character), *Sthana* (seat), *Karma* (action), types and their effects in the body, *Vatajprakriti* (temperament), causes of aggravation of *Vata* and their effects and management etc have also been said which are stated in other *Samhitas* too. This is the first *Samhita* where the manifestation of the disease has been told in six stages after having vitiation of the *Vatadi doshas*. It was well known to *Acharya sushruta* that it is very difficult to manage

the *Vata* that's why he added two different chapters in the *Chikitsasthana* named as *Vatavyadhichikitsa* and *Mahavatavyadhi Chikitsa-adhyaya*.

CONCLUSION

After going through previous reviews and discussion it is found that there is detailed description of *Vatadosha* in *Sushruta samhita*. First time two dimensional etymology of *Vata* has been found in *Samhitas* as *Gati* (movement) and *Gandhana* (energy). First time development of disease told via *Vatadi doshas* in six stages as *Kriyakala*. There have been no references found where all eighty types of *Vatikavikaras* have been enumerated. It can be said conclusively that *Vata dosha* is biological humour which presents and acts all over the body, represents itself in the body in the form of action or movement and performs its action via force or the energy or the power.

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