

“Critical Review of *ShatKriyakala: A Conceptual Study*”

Pramod F. Garje¹, Vasudha Sunil Umate^{*2}, Ashish Y. Gotmare³,

1. HOD and Professor,
2. P. G. Scholar,
3. Assistant Professor,

Dept. of Roganidana evum Vikriti Vigyana,
Shri Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Nagpur, Maharashtra, India

***Corresponding Author's:** Mob.: 9588455982; E-mail: vasudhaumate07@gmail.com

ABSTRACT-

Acharya Sushrut, pioneer of the *Sushrut Samhita*, has discussed about *ShatKriyakala* in his treatise in the chapter entitled ‘Vran-prashniya Adhyaya’. It is a phenomenon observed in almost all the disorders. The concept of *ShatKriyakala* is applicable in nidana aspect for proper diagnosis and gives an idea to plan the line of treatment of that disease. The concept of *ShatKriyakala* is of utmost importance from public health intervention point of view and more especially from the perspective of disease control stratagem. *Kriyakala* is similar to what has been described as disease cycle or natural history of disease in modern medicine. Modern diagnostic tools have equipped the doctor to identify any disease and treat it in *Sthana Samshraya* stage only whereas Ayurveda emphasizes on maintaining homeostasis by taking proper measures in initial stages of *ShatKriyakala*. The strategies described in *ShatKriyakala* for the

prevention and management of clinical entities can be applied at individual and community level which bears considerable public health importance. Hence, the concept of *ShatKriyakala* delineated in classical treatises of Ayurveda are of great significance.

Key words:-

ShatKriyakala, *Sushrut Samhita*, *Chikitsaavasara*, Prevention and Management of disease.

INTRODUCTION

In today's era enormous new diseases are come into across globally due today's sedentary lifestyle, pollution, eating behavior (pattern, habit), many more cause. The inabilities of man to achieve and maintain his internal steady-state equilibrium initiate the process of disease. According to present scenario, now it is high time to focus on the prevention of diseases in society with the application of gold standard Ayurvedic wisdom. The disease process once

initiated, moves through *ShatKriyakala*, the recognition of which latter is important from the point of view of preventive and curative aspects of *Ayurveda*. *ShatKriyakala* i.e. six stages are mentioned by *Acharya Sushruta* which gives an idea regarding the present condition of *Doshadushti* and also the progress of any disease in the body right from its beginning^[1]. It is one of the most important *Ayurvedic* principles explaining not only the stages of disease manifestation but also treatment approach in detail.

Sushruta has stated that “the treatment of a disease should be initiated at the appropriate time. It should not be neglected under any conditions whatsoever”^[2]. As stated above *ShatKriyakala* described by *Acharya Sushruta* not only permits the systematic recognition of progress of any particular disease but also guides for prevention of the same long before it progresses into evidently distinguished disease. By knowing the importance of this unique concept study was selected which was conceptual in nature. This study was little effort to explain & highlight over the importance of *ShatKriyakala* literary.

OBJECTIVES

1. To understand the concept of *ShatKriyakala*.
2. To understand the importance of *ShatKriyakala*.
3. To understand the role of *ShatKriyakala* in creation and prevention of disorders.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

1. Materials were compiled from *Ayurvedic* Samhitas and their all

available commentaries.

2. Various publications, text books, research papers, data available on internet were also considered to collect the literary material.
3. All the compiled literary materials were critically analyzed and rearranged or the discussion and attempt has been made to draw some fruitful conclusions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Kriya means action/treatment/a opportunities and Kala means time. So, *Kriyakala* means the specific time for treatment or opportunities in the process of disease manifestation.

In *Sushruta Samhita*, the word ‘*Kriyakala*’ has been used in two contexts -

1. *Sushruta Sutrasthana Adhyaya 1*:- While explaining *Chikitsa Chatushtaya*, the word *Kriyakala* is used for specific time to perform *Snehadi* and *Chhedyadi Karma*. This context mainly concentrates on specific time of administration of various treatment procedures which include *Shamanachikitsa*, *Shodhanakarma*, and *Shastrakarma*^[3].
2. *Sushruta Sutrasthana Adhyaya 21*:- Here, the word ‘*Kriyakala*’ is represented by six stages in the evolutive process of disease. They are *Sanchaya*, *Prakopa*, *Prasara*, *Sthanasamshraya*, *Vyakti* and *Bheda*^[1].

Dalhana, the commentator of *Sushruta Samhita* has described *Kriyakala* as ‘*Chikitsavasara*’ or ‘*Karmavasara*’. Implied in this concept,

is the need to recognize the Avastha or the stage of the process of disease and resort suitable measures to correct the same.

The six stages of *Dosha* in diseases evolution as per *Acharya Sushruta* are Chaya, Prakopa, Prasara, Sthanasanshraya, Vyakti and Bheda.

1. SANCHAYA

Sanchaya is the first stage of *Kriyakala*. It is also known as Samhati Rupa Vriddhi. Literally *Sanchaya* means accumulation or collection. In context to *ShatKriyakala*, *Sanchaya* means accumulation of *Doshas* in their respective seat- *Chayo Vriddhihi Swadhamneva*. The patient develops dislike for things which causes of increase of *Dosha*^[4]. It is very essential to treat the patient in this stage to arrest further progression of disease^[5]. Dalhana has described two types of *Vriddhi* (Aggravation) i.e. *Samhatirupa* and *Vilayanarupa*^[6].

The accumulated *Doshas* manifests certain symptoms that are as follows^[7]:

- a. *Vata Sanchaya Lakshana*:
Stabdhapoorna-koshtata
(stiffness and fullness in abdomen).
- b. *Pitta Sanchaya Lakshana*:
Pitavabhasata Mando
ushamta
(Yellowishness of the body parts and slight rise in body temperature).
- c. *Kapha Sanchaya Lakshana*:
Anganam
gauravta Alasyam

(Heaviness in the whole body with lassitude)

2. PRAKOPA

In this stage 2nd stage of the *ShatKriyakala* the *Dosha* go on accumulating further in their own sites^[8]. *Prakopa* has been defined as a condition in which the *Doshas* being excited by suitable causes i.e., continuous intake of improper *Ahara* (food), *Vihara* (regimen) and *Aushadha* (medicine) and leads to *dravyatah*, *gunatah* and *karmatah vikruti* of *Dosha*. In this stage the *Doshas* travel to their other locations in the body (*Unmargagamita*)^[9].

The symptoms develop in this avastha are as follows^[10]:-

- a. *Vata Prakopa Lakshana*: *Koshta toda sancharana* (Pain in abdomen and movement of *Vata* in *Mahasrotasa*).
- b. *Pitta Prakopa Lakshana*: *Amlika* (Sour eructations), *Pipasa* (excessive thirst) and *Paridaha* (burning sensation all over the body).
- c. *Kapha Prakopa Lakshana*: *Annadwesa* (Dislike to food), *Hridyotkledascha* (Excessive salivation in mouth).

Acharya Chakrapani and *Hemadri* have described two types of *Prakopa* (*Vriddhi*) in their own words^{[11][12]}. Both of these can be summarized as follows-

- a. *Chayapurvaka prakopa* (with accumulation): with successive accumulation, stage by stage or insidious increase i.e., *Dosha prakopa* will take place with prior *sanchaya avastha*.
- b. *Achayapurvaka prakopa* (without accumulation): without

successive accumulation or quickly i.e., *Dosha prakopa* will take place without prior *sanchaya*.

3. PRASARA

The term Prasara means, 'spreading to wider area' or 'an active movement, diffusion or expansion from their usual seats into other places' [13]. In this stage, *Dosha* which had been already loosened, swollen and provoked; overflow and spread over in body. Aggravated *Doshas* leave their original place and Spread to the other Parts of the body through different srotas.

The symptoms develop in this avastha are as follows^[14]-

- a. *Vata Prasara Lakshana:*
Vimarga-Gamana
(Regurgitation), *Atopa*
(flatulence).
- b. *Pitta Prasara Lakshana:* *Osha*
(sense of boiling), *Chosha*
(squeezing sense), *Paridaha*
(burning sensation),
Dhoomayanani (Emitting smoke from mouth).
- c. *Kapha Prasara Lakshana:*
Arochaka (anorexia), *Avipaka*
(dyspepsia), *Angasada*
(lassitude) and *Chardi*
(vomiting).

Doshas moves to different places with the help of Vayu either alone or in combinations. These are of 15 types^[15].

(1) *Vata Prasara* (2) *Pitta Prasara* (3) *Kapha Prasara* (4) *Rakta Prasara* (5) *Vata Pitta Prasara* (6) *Vat kapha Prasara* (7) *Vata Rakta Prasara* (8) *Pitta kapha Prasara* (9) *Pitta Rakta Prasara* (10) *Kapha Rakta Prasara* (11) *Vata*

Pitta Kapha Prasara (12) *Pitta Kapha Rakta Prasara*. (13) *Vata Pitta Kapha Prasara* (14) *Vata Kapha Rakta Prasara*. (15) *Vata Pitta Kapha Rakta Prasara*.

4. STHANSANSHRAYA

In this stage the aggravated *Dosha* start to localize to any part of the body and manifest the specific diseases pertaining to that part. The *Dosha* undergo further increase and get amalgamated with the *Dushya*, while circulating in its channels finds itself incapable of entering into the minute Srotas (cell pores) in such places where *Srotodushti* has also taken place. The *Dosha* being present in the *Rasadhatu* also get settled in those places. This activity is known as *Sthanasanshraya* of the *Dosha* (localization). The *Dosha* thus getting localized or settled at particular places come in direct and intimate contact with the *Dushya* which have also undergone *Vaishamya* (abnormality). This *Samyoga* of abnormal *Dosha* and abnormal *Dushya*, known as *Dosha-Dushya Sammurchhana*. In this stage, definite structural lesions begin to evolve. These two *Vikrita* (abnormal) *Dosha* and *Dushya* give rise to development of symptoms of distress to the body. Such symptoms are actually the *Purvarupa* of specific diseases^[16].

5. VYAKTI

Dalhana has called this stage as a stage of manifestation of disease^[17]. In this stage, clinical features are well produces and one can easily identify the disease. Cardinal signs and symptoms of the diseases are expressed in this stage. These attributes also called by several synonyms such as *Rupa*, *Samsthana*,

Vyanjana, Linga, Lakshana, Chinha and Akriti^[18]. For example – *Shopha, Arbuda, Granthi, Vidradhi, Visarpa, Jwara, Atisaradi vyadhi*.

The signs and symptoms appearing in this *Vyakti* stage are broadly classified into two kinds:

- Samanya Lakshanas*: general signs and symptoms produced by the increased *Dosha* which may be seen in all disease commonly.
- Pratyatma Lakshanas*: specific or peculiar signs and symptoms which are seen in any one disease characteristically.

6. BHEDA

This is the last stage in which disease can be diagnosed correctly and its *Doshaj* type can be decided. It is also consider as a complicated stage. In this stage diseases became *chirakari* (chronic) or *asadhya* (incurable).

Bhedavastha here refers to the nature of the termination of the disease (*Vyadhimukti*) or the termination of the

disease by cure leading on to convalescence; or the assumption of *chronicity* (*Dirgha Kalanubandhi*) or setting in of complications; or the creation of a susceptibility for other diseases; or termination in death^[19]. As per commentators *Chakrapani* and *Dalhana*, in this stage the *Dosha* involved in the disease may become fully defined and can be recognized.

It is very important to identify the *Dosha* *vikruti* in early stages and treat accordingly to cease the further progress of disease. The to do treatment plan is explained according the severity of *Dosha dushti* manifested as follows^[20]–

- 1) *BahuDosha avastha*- *Shodhana*
- 2) *MadhyDosha* *avastha*-
Langhana, Pachana
- 3) *AlpaDosha avastha*- *Sanshamana*

Instead of this brief treatment plan, adoption of some precise therapeutic procedures in every stage of *ShatKriyakala* would be better helpful to arrest the disease proceeding. Such procedures are explained in table 1-

TABLE NO 1: PARTICULAR TREATMENT ACCORDING TO *SHATKRIYAKALA*.

Sr. No.	Stage	Therapeutic Measures
1.	<i>Sanchaya</i>	<i>Nidan Parivarjana, Suitable Shamana</i>
2.	<i>Prakopa</i>	<i>Vata-Vatanulomana</i> <i>Pitta- Pitta shamana /Sukhvirechan Kapha- Agnideepan, Pachana, Kaphahara</i>
3.	<i>Prasara</i>	<i>Vata- Basti</i> <i>Pitta-Virechana. Kapha- Vamana.</i>
4.	<i>Sthanasanshraya</i>	<i>Samprapti vighatana</i>
5.	<i>Vyakti</i>	<i>Lakshanik and as per chikitsa siddhantas.</i>
6.	<i>Bheda</i>	<i>Doshpratyanik and Vyadhipratyanik chikitsa.</i>

DISCUSSION

The concept of *ShatKriyakala* is of utmost importance from public health intervention point of view and more especially from the perspective of disease control stratagem. *Kriyakala* gives an opportunity at each stage to halt the disease process by appropriate measure(s). *Kriyakala* is similar to what has been described as disease cycle or natural history of disease in modern medicine. The stage of Sanchaya and Prakopa can be comparable with that of the stage of susceptibility. The stage of susceptibility is also called as stage of “Pre-pathogenesis” by some authorities. In this stage, the risk factors and the host should interact with each other in a suitable and favorable environment for the disease to occur. At the Prasara and *Sthanasanshraya avastha*, the vitiated or aggravated *Dosha* start moving and get settled at a particular organ or organ system. At this stage, the disease is neither clearly evident nor completely buried. Hence, the diagnosis of a disease becomes difficult at this stage. The modern tools and techniques cannot identify the disease at this stage. This stage is comparable with that of pre-symptomatic disease where the disease process has already begun, but the overt signs and symptoms are not evident. The fifth stage of *ShatKriyakala* is *Vyakti* where the disease is clinically manifested. This is comparable with the stage of clinical disease in natural history of disease. As this stage is marked with clinical signs and symptoms, the modes of intervention at this stage would be early diagnosis and treatment. The last stage of *ShatKriyakala* is *Bheda*, which can be compared with the stage of

diminished capacity. This stage may end up with recovery, disability, or death^[20]. Hence, the strategies described in *ShatKriyakala* for the prevention and management of clinical entities can be applied at individual and community level which bears considerable public health importance.

CONCLUSION

The proper knowledge of *ShataKriyakala* helps in understanding the process of manifestation of various diseases as well as to diagnose the diseases. The physician who is capable of differentiating and understanding these six stages of *Dosha*; diagnose and treat the disease accurately according to *ShataKriyakala* will become a *Bhishak* i.e., successful practitioner. The knowledge of *ShataKriyakala* is helpful for knowing what kind of treatment should be administered in respective stage of *Dosha*. It precisely gives idea of the *Sadhyaasadhyatva* of disease. After all the elaboration about the topic *Acharyas* warn the physician not to procrastinate *Kriyakala* in any way that it will lead to *asadhyata* of *vyadhi* and failure in *chikitsa*. Hence, the concept of *ShatKriyakala* delineated in classical treatises of *Ayurveda* are of great significance.

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