MANASA PRAKRUTI

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda puts special emphasis on the constitution of man. All measures of preservation of health and cure for disease are based in consideration of the constitution of the individual. The constitution of a man is considered to determine his susceptibility to different diseases, the pattern of their presentation, complications and overall prognosis. Accordingly, it also determines the individual response to the therapy given. Thus, a consideration of the constitution of a man is very fundamental to the Indian System of Medicine.
Background

Prakruti in Ayurveda refers to an individual’s inherent nature, the inborn tendencies which influence the consciousness and activity. Different meanings of prakruti are nature, temperament, constitution, form, origin etc. Prakruti lakshana by Susrutacarya “prakopavoanyadha bhavakhayo vannopajayate Prakrutinamsvabhavenajayate tu gatyayusha”. The temperament of a man is never aggravated nor does it suffer any deterioration. A change or deterioration in any particular case should be regarded as the harbinger of death. Before undertaking the examination of the patient, it is necessary for the physician to have a thorough knowledge of the normalcy of the human being in all aspects. Nothing can be judged abnormal without knowing the normal. So it is essential that prakriti pariksha is to done first and vikriti pariksha later. Acarya Caraka considers Prakruti as one of the bhavas, while describing Dasavidha pareekshya bhavas. According to Sankhya, there are three major attributes - satva, rajas and tamas. All human beings have been basically grouped under these triads. Ayurveda considers rajas and tamas as manodoshas capable of producing diseases and satva as manoguna.

Aims and objectives

To understand manasa prakriti in Ayurveda in a detailed manner

Methodology -conceptual study

Ayurveda is the science of life and life according to Ayurveda is the state of union of four components namely, the body(sareera), the sensory and motor faculties (indriyas), mind (manas) and soul(Atma). Mind is considered as ubhayendriya. It is located in the body itself and can be considered as the super faculty. According to Caraka, mental faculty is of three types-Satvika, Rajasa and Tamasa. The Satvika one is free from defects as it is endowed with auspiciousness. Rajasa type is defective because it promotes wrathful disposition. The Tamasa one is similarly defective because it suffers from ignorance. More over the word satva is also used as a synonym of mind. Rajas is a factor of aggression(rosha) and tamas is a factor of confusion (Moho). Mind influenced fairly and constantly by the predominance of rajas is called rajasa satva and similarly influenced by tamas is called tamasa satva. Mind that is not affected by rajas and tamas is in its pure form and hence is called Suddha satva.

Distinctive features of the different classes of mental temperaments:

Satvika features Saucam-cleanness, astikyam-belief in gods, sukla dharma ruci-inclination to follow the path of pure virtue (A.H.Sa 3/7-8) Anrsamsyam -an absence of hostile propensities, samvibhaga rucita-judicious distribution, titiksha-forbearance, satyam-truthfulness, dharmam-religious acts, astikyam-belief in gods, jnanam-spiritual knowledge, budhi-intellect, medha-retentive faculty, smrti-memory, dhrti-comprehension, anabhishangam-doing good deeds irrespective of consequences. (Su.Sa 1/17)

Rajasa features

Tamasa features Bhayam-fear, ajnanam-ignorance, nidra-sleep, alasyam-laziness, vishadita-grief (A.H.Sa 3/7-8)

Vishaditvam-despair, nastikyam-not believing in existence of god, dharma seelata-irreligious stupefaction, budhi nirodham-perversion of intellect, ajnanam-ignorance, durmeda-stubborn thoughts, akarma seelata-lethargy in action, nidralutvam-sleepiness. (Su.Sa 1/17)

The satvika type of mental faculty is of seven types depending upon the disposition of Brahma, Rishi, Indra, Yama, Varuna, Kubera and Gandharva. Rajasa type having six types, namely Asura, Rakshasa, Pisacha, Sarpa, Preta and Sakuni. Tamasa type is of three types; Pasava, Matsya and Vanaspatya.

Different types of Satvika individuals

1.Brahma (sharing the traits of Brahma)
Clean, love for truth, self-restrained, power of discrimination, material and spiritual knowledge, freedom from passion, anger, greed, ego, ignorance, jealousy, dejection and intolerance and favorable disposition equally for all creatures.

2.Arsha (sharing the traits of Rsis)
Devotion to sacred rituals, study, sacred vows, oblations and celibacy, hospitable disposition, freedom from pride, ego, attachment, hatred, ignorance, greed and anger, intellectual excellence, power of understanding and retention.

3.Aindra
Lordship, authoritative speech, performance of sacred rituals, bravery, strength and splendour, far sightedness, devotion to virtuous acts, earning of wealth and proper satisfaction of desires.

4.Yamya
Observance of the propriety of actions, initiation of actions in time, non-violability, memory and lordship, freedom from attachment, envy, hatred and ignorance.

5 Varuna
Bravery, patience, purity, dislike for impurity, observance of religious rites, fondness for aquatic sports, exhibition of anger and pleasure in proper place.

6 Kaubera
Possession of honour, luxuries and attendants, constant liking for virtuous acts, wealth and satisfaction of desires, purity, liking for pleasures of recreation.

7 Gandharva
Fondness for dancing, singing, music and praise, expertness in poetry, stories, historical narrations and epics, constant fondness for scents, garlands, association of women and passion. Of the seven types of satvika mental faculties described above, Brahma is the purest.

Different types of Rajasa individuals

1.Asura
Bravery, cruelty, envy, lordship, movement in disguise, terrifying appearance, ruthlessness, indulgence in self-praise

2 Rakshasa
Intolerance, constant anger, violence at weak points, gluttonous habit, fondness for non-vegetarian food, excessive sleep, cruelty

3 Paisaca
Gluttonous habit, fondness for women, unclean habits, cowardice and terrifying disposition, resorting to abnormal diet and regimens.

4 Sarpa
Bravery when in wrathful disposition and cowardice when not in wrathful disposition, sharp reaction, taking food and resorting to other regimens with a fearful disposition.

5 Praita
Excessive desire for food, excessively painful disposition in character and past times, enviousness, actions without discrimination, excessive greediness

6 Sakuna
Attachment with passion, excessive food and regimen, unsteadiness, ruthlessness and acquisitiveness

Different types of Tamasa individuals

The tamasika type of mental faculty represents ignorant disposition and is of three types.

1. Pasava
Forbidding disposition, lack of intelligence, hateful conduct and food habit, excessive sexual indulgence and sleep.

2. Matsya
Cowardice, lack of intelligence, greediness for food, unsteadiness, fondness for constant movement and desire for water.

3. Vanaspatya
Indulgence in food and deficiency of intellectual faculties.

Discussion and conclusion

The concept of *prakruti* in Ayurveda is a topic that needs more discussion. It should be defined and elaborated with the help of modern psychology. Each individual has a different temperament. The descriptions of personalities available in Ayurveda are the simplest account of the genetically determined temperament of man. *Manasika prakruti* has significant implications as regard to the problems of mental health and psychiatric medicine. Thus Susrutacarya says, *kayanam prakrutim jnatva anurupam kriyam caret,* that is the physician should first of all ascertain the prakriti of the individual and thereafter initiate the treatments suitable to him.

References


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