



Human Personality and Charaka's Theory of Dhatus

Dr. Biswajit Satpathy

Ph. D & D. Sc (Management), Professor, Department of Business Administration, Sambalpur University, Jyoti Vihar, Burla, Odisha

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.55248/gengpi.2022.3.9.7>

ABSTRACT:

The theory of Dhatus (Tissues) is a typical element in Ayurvedic medical science. The human body contains eight main substances; known as Dhatus that give support and strength to our body. The human temperament and its behavioural manifestations are proportionally related to these substances and their proper presence is called 'health'. Charaka, one of the great physicians of Ayurvedic medicine, methodically observed the human behaviours and temperaments. He concluded that besides physiology, human behaviours and temperaments are also motivated by various factors like environment and geography, thus fixing the platform for holistic perspectives.

Keywords: Charaka, theory of Dhatus, temperament, environment, Kanada,

Introduction

Charaka (100-300 BCE) was one of the foremost Acharyas of [Ayurveda](#), a pattern of medicine and lifestyle which was developed in Ancient India. Charaka is the editor of the medical treatise called "[Charaka Samhita](#)", one of the basic texts of Indian medicine and Ayurveda, included under [Brhat-
Trayi](#). The Brhat-Trayi, actually translated as "The Great Triad (Of Compositions)", which refer to three old Sanskrit encyclopedias of Ayurveda medicine.

Charaka initiation of precise scientific approach has its impacts not only on ancient Indian system of medicine but also on science in general. [Charaka Samhita](#) has discussed on number of medical fields like General Medicine, Pathology, Gynecology, Pediatrics, Neurology, etc. He has tried to understand the basic problem and then cure the specific disease scientifically, and not by superstitious method. Charaka is the person who appears as one of the preliminary promoters of "prevention is better than cure" doctrine. These are some statement of Charaka's attribution to the society:

"A physician who fails to enter the body of a patient with the lamp of knowledge and understanding can never treat diseases. He should first study all the factors, including environment, which influence a patient's disease, and then prescribe treatment. It is more important to prevent the occurrence of disease than to seek a cure."

Kanada lived sometime before 300 BCE, a contemporary of Charaka. The concept of Anu(atom) the fundamental particle was proposed by Kanada. According to him, "Anu(atom) is an indestructible particle of matter. The atom is indivisible because it is a state at which no measurement can be attributed. He used invariance arguments to determine properties of the atoms." (en.wikipedia.org). "[Vaisheshika Sutra](#) also called *Kanada Sutra*, is an ancient Sanskrit text at the foundation of the [Vaisheshika](#) school of Hindu philosophy. The sutra was authored by the Hindu sage Kanada." (wikimili.com). "Among the six orthodox schools of philosophy, Vaisheshika system is also one and *Ayurveda* has taken the fundamental principles of this school of thought which are helpful in its applied aspects." (citeseerx.ist.psu.edu). Charaka had "targeted real bases for disease using more determinism and causality, as inspired by contemporary genius" Kanada, the founder philosopher of *Vaisheshika* system.

Charaka Theory of Dhātu

"The Vaisheshika system holds that the smallest, indivisible, indestructible part of the world is an atom (*Anu*). All physical things are a combination of the atoms of earth, water, fire, and air. [Dravya](#), or substance, the substratum that exists independently of all other categories, and the material cause of all compound things produced from it. *Dravyas* are nine in number: earth, water, fire, air, ether, time, space, spirit, and mind." (www.britannica.com/topic/Vaisheshika).

Kanada clearly had stated that "Anu 'atoms' ('further undividable' particles) and *Dravyas* as the ultimate building blocks of all other compound Matters. Thus, Nature's fundamental forms are defined entities moving according to a law of permutation and combination of *Dravyas* and relatively independent of other external influences. In a similar context, Charaka attempted to identify the basic constituents of the human body. He therefore propounded the existence of eight basic Dhatus (tissues)." (www.britannica.com/topic/Vaisheshika). These Dhatus (tissues) gives strength to the body and stability, which are as follows:

1. Rakta (Blood)
2. Rasa/Twak (Skin)
3. Asthi (Bone)
4. Medas (Fat)
5. Mamsa (Muscles)
6. Sattva (Mind)
7. Majja (Marrows)
8. Shukra (Sperm)

The purified part or the essence of a Dhatu is known as Sara. This Sara provides strength and stability to the body. The Sarata of Dhatu changes due to variation in food, environment, season, lifestyle etc. For good health, happiness, enjoyment, longevity, attention must be paid to Sarata and one should try to maintain good balance of the key elements of the body (Dosha, Mala and Dhatu). The physical and mental health of a person is affected by the Sara-Asar condition of Dhatus. Charaka recommends for assessment of the “Sara of every Dhatu to know the strength of the Dhatu as well as strength of the mind. In the Dashvidha Pariksha of Ayurveda, Sara Pariksha is one of the important investigations to know the strength of body and the mind”. (ijapc.com).

Depending on the Sarata of a Dhatu the health and personality of the persons changes from each other. In some people we find the dominance of a Dhatu Sarata then other Dhatus. Basing on the strength of a Dhatu we can categorize people into eight categories. For example if we find someone with dominant with Rasa Sara then we can tell him a Rasa Sara Purusha. The eight different types of Purushas or we may call it personality according to Dhatu Sarata are

1. Rasa/Twak Sara Purusha
2. Rakta Sara Purusha
3. Mamsa Sara Purusha
4. Medas Sara Purusha
5. Asthi Sara Purusha
6. Majja Sara Purusha
7. Shukra Sara Purusha
8. Sattva Sara Purusha

Features of Distinct Sara Purusha in accordance with the Samhitas

The characteristics of distinct Dhatu Sara *Purushas* are available in various texts of Ayurveda. They are as follows:-

Twak Sara Purusha/Rasa

“Individuals having the excellence of Twak or skin are characterized by unctuous, smooth, soft, clear, fine, less numerous, deep rooted and tender hair and lustrous skin. Such Individual is endowed with happiness, good fortunes, power, enjoyment, intellect, knowledge, health, excitement and longevity. One, whose skin and hairs are good looking and soft, is to be understood as Twak Sara person.” (www.researchgate.net) Uttam twak Sara person are deficient of any type of skin disorders, their skin condition is natural, according to Kashyapa “Uttamtwak Sara person possess quality of rapid wound healing⁵”.

Rakta Sara Purusha

“Individuals having the excellence of Rakta or blood are characterized by unctuousness, red colour, beautiful dazzling appearance of the ears, eyes, face, tongue, nose, lips, soles of the hand and feet, nails, forehead and genital organs. Such individual is endowed with happiness, great genius, enthusiasm, tenderness, moderate strength and inability to face difficulties. Their body remains hot⁶. Rakta Sara person is known to possess unctuous and coppery nails, eyes, palate, tongue, lips, palms and soles⁵.” (www.jetir.org)

Mamsa Sara Purusha

“Individuals having the excellence of the Mamsa Dhatu are characterized by stability, heaviness, beautiful appearance and plumpness of temples, forehead, nape, eyes, cheeks, jaws, neck, shoulder, abdomen maxillae, chest and joints of upper and lower limbs being covered with flesh. Such individuals are endowed with forgiveness, patience, non-greediness, wealth, knowledge, happiness, simplicity, health, strength and longevity⁷. Mamsa Sara person is known to possess few depressions in the body, have well-covered bones and joints and musculature⁵.” (www.jetir.org)

Meda Sara Purusha

“Individual having the excellence of the Meda Dhatu is characterized by the abundance of unctuousness in complexion, voice, eyes, hair of the head and other parts of the body, nail, teeth, lips, urine and feces. Such Individual is endowed with wealth, power, happiness, enjoyment, charity, simplicity

and delicate habits⁸. Meda Sara person is known to pass unctuous urine and sweat which has a mellow voice, a bulky body and are incapable of doing physical labor⁵.”(ijapc.com).

Asthi Sara Purusha

“Individual having the excellence of the Asthi Dhatu is characterized by robust heels, ankles, knees, forearms, collarbones, chin, head, joints, bones, nails and teeth. Such Individual is very enthusiastic and active and is endowed with strong and firm bodies as well as longevity⁹. Ashtisara person is known to possess a big head and shoulders and big teeth, big jaws, bones and nails⁵.” (ijapc.com)

Majja Sara Purusha

“Individual having the excellence of the Majja Dhatu is characterized by softness of organs, strength, unctuous complexion and voice and robust long and rounded joints .Such Individual are endowed with longevity, strength, wealth, knowledge, progeny and honour¹⁰. Majja Sara person is known to be not lean and thin, but to be powerful to possess mellow and sonorous voice and is endowed with good fortune and has big eyes⁵.” (www.worldwidejournals.com)

Shukra Sara Purusha

“Individual having the excellence of the Shukra Dhatu are characterized by gentleness, gentle look having eyes as if filled with milk, cheerfulness, having teeth which are unctuous, round, strong, even and beautiful, clean and unctuous complexion and voice, dazzling appearance and large buttocks. Such individual are loved by women, they are strong and endowed with happiness, power, health, wealth, honor and children¹¹Shukra Sara person is known to possess unctuous, compact and white bones, teeth and nails and has excessive sexual desire and children⁵.” (www.worldwidejournals.com)

Satva Sara Purusha

“The persons having the excellence of the mental faculties are characterized by good memory, believes in god, grateful, intelligent fond of cleanliness, enthusiastic, cautious, having patience, brave, fighting spirit and devoid of unnecessary tensions and worries, proper way of thinking, serious and deep thinking, proper activity and are well-wisher and helping nature¹². The person is endowed with good memory, devotion, intelligence, cleanliness, valor, bravery, benevolent thought and actions-should be understood as Satva Sara person with excellent mind⁵.” (ijapccom)

This notion of Charaka, i.e. the correctness of Dhatus Sara indicates us to Mathematics, and a quantitative path towards advancement in Medicine Science. Modern medical science had debated on the “knowledge of geometry and numerology is very useful in Medical Physiology, Pathophysiology, Orthopedics, Pathologic-Anatomy and Therapeutic”(Eftichiadis1995). “Importantly, for those physicians who diagnose patients and treat them directly, it is vital to understand the precise doses of the drugs to be administered (Kalachanis2011).” (core.ac.uk)

“Despite the fact that modern Science has pointed away from those Dhatus, there remains a compellingly common point with Ayurvedic notions: the existence of basic biochemical substances and building blocks in the body.” (core.ac.uk)

“According to modern knowledge Sara can be considered as the optimum degree of genetic code of an individual’s DNA with respect to particular Dhatu. Our genetic material DNA is made of nucleotides containing the bases adenine (A), cytosine (C), guanine (G) and thymine (T). Nucleotides mix to construct genes and chromosomes with ultra-high precision in their amounts as well as sequence. Genetic code is the system of storage of genetic information’s in chromosomes of living cells that instruct the machinery of polypeptide synthesis to insert a particular amino acid in response to the nucleotide sequence of genetic material. In our body every individual’s DNA has the different genetic code. So, the quality of Dhatus of every individual will depend upon the genetic code of the individual’s DNA. If the genetic code of the individual’s DNA with respect to that Dhatu is optimum, the formation of the particular Dhatu in the body will be of very good quality.” (ijapc.com)

Dhatus and Human Behavior

Charaka’s Dhatu theory is not confined to various diseases of the body, however, it makes sure to analyze human personality, pointing at the Body-Mind issues similar to the current science. In this context, Charaka viewed that the ratios of the strength of the Dhatus in the human body mainly dominate the temperament, which lead to eight distinct kinds of people with their behaviors given in the table 1.

Table 1: The correlation between the Dhatus, the temperament with the attributes of character which shows the human physiology has an extensive effect on human behavior.

DHATU	TEMPERAMENT	ATTRIBUTES OF CHARACTER
Rasa/Twak	Excited, Cheerful, Dominant, Intellectual	Happiness, good fortunes, knowledge, healthy and longevity
Rakta	Happy, Enthusiastic, Tender in heart, Genius	Moderate strength and inability to face difficulties

Mamsa	Forgiveness , Simple, patience, non-greediness, Happy, Knowledgeable	Wealthy, healthy, strength and longevity
Meda	Wealthy, powerful, happy, Believes in enjoyment, charity, simplicity and have delicate habits	Mellow voice, a healthy body and are lack of doing physical labor
Asthi	Very passionate and energetic	Best owed with strong and resistance bodies in addition to endurance, big head and shoulders, teeth, jaws, large bones and nails.
Majja	Knowledgeable	Possess mellow and sonorous voice, progeny, unctuous complexion
Shukra	Gentleness, gentle look, cheerful, excessive sexual desire	Have teeth which are unctuous, full toned, muscular, as well as attractive, clean and unctuous appearance and voice, glowing appearance and big buttocks
Satva	Good memory, intelligent, pious, enthusiastic, cautious, patient, brave, fighting spirit and cool, thinkers	Excellent mind, believes in cleanliness, well-wishers and have helping nature

“Thus, obviously Dhatu strength in the human body does not only contribute to its health state, but also serve to predict and/or indicate character types. Besides the effects of Dhatus, Charaka believed that environmental factors may also impact the human temperament: Both the temperament and the mood of the inhabitants of a particular region are subject to changes by factors such as the ambient air, its weather, and its general conditions. The fact which changes not only the mood but also in productivity correlate to weather conditions (Barnston 1988), is supportive of Charakas’ view, suggesting that the human psychological state is indeed influenced decisively by the environmental circumstances.” (core.ac.uk)

“Charaka’s unquestioned place among exponents of Ayurveda is due to his exquisite and keen observation based explanations. A very unique contribution of Charaka, is the concept of ‘Janapadodwamsa’. Janapadodwamsaneeyadhyaya is explained in the Vimanasthana of CharakaSamhitha. This chapter delves elaborately into the causes of mass destruction of lives like natural calamities, epidemics etc. It carries the seed of public health management. He states that destruction of lives in massive proportion takes place from four factors, i.e. DushitaJala (water), Vayu (air), Bhoomi (land) and Kala (time). It points to the polluted water, air and land as we discuss in modern times. He went on to suggest that the dushti in these factors can be corrected if acted early and properly. But the fourth factor Kala (time) cannot be reverted. The root cause of Janapadodwamsa is Adharma. Charaka had stratified the adharma and had detailed on its progression. According to him Adharma originates from Prajnaparadha or derangement of cognitive faculties of the rulers or the upper elite class of society. The elite group represents the policy makers of the society. From them the adharma transcends to the lower strata of commoners or workers. Charaka clearly elaborates that janapadodwamsa does not take a sudden violent course of outbreak. It takes a cumulative slow progression as we see in all sorts of pollution related catastrophes. Due to adharma, the physical factors of environment like water, air and land gets polluted with no evidence of maladies. As the pollution reaches the threshold, it manifest itself as natural calamities like thunder storms, cyclones, forest fire, epidemics etc. This is the relevance of the fourth factor Kala (time). Charaka went on to explain the futility of medicines in Janapadodwamsa. He correctly claims that the drugs and herbs available during a natural calamity are already afflicted by the influence of polluting factors. They are considered heenavirya, devoid of the potency to cure a disease. So in epidemics inflicting an area, the drugs used for treatment are to be collected from other areas devoid of pollution or with those collected prior to the contamination” (Benil P.B and Patil Usha, “Environmental Activism in Ayurveda” https://www.researchgate.net/publication/321025744_Kanchi_Article). Charaka, having travelled to many different geographical regions of the ancient India, had made his own original observations on the potential connection between human temperament and the environment.

Conclusion

In brief, according to Charaka, the human body consists of eight Dhatus, whose harmonious presence and strength are a medium for preserving health. Furthermore, also reliant on the strength of the Dhatus in human bodies, are various personality of human temperaments and behavior. Lastly, in addition to Dhatus, temperaments and behaviors are influenced by the environment, specifically the place of residence. Therefore, selecting a place where to live is a choice that not only affects our health through its medium of potential environmental effects, even regulates human temperament and personality.

References

1. SharmaPV. CharakaSamhita, Vol.1. reprint edition 2011,Chaukhambha Orientalia;Varanasi,India.(JaikrishnadasAyurvedaSeriesNo.36).Cha. Vi.8/94p375
2. Sharma PV. CharakaSamhita, Vol.1.reprint edition 2011,Chaukhambha Orientalia;Varanasi,India.(JaikrishnadasAyurvedaSeriesNo.36).Cha. Vi.8/102-106,p-378.
3. Murthy KRS. Sushruta Samhita, Vol.1:ChaukhambhaOrientalia;Varanasi, India 2008 SuSutra.35/16 p 245-246.
4. Tewari PV VriddhaJivaka, Kashyapa Samhita, Sutrasthana, reprinted 2002,Chou khambhaVisvabharati,Varanasi, KashyapaSu.28/36-37 p 86.

5. Sharma PV.Charaka Samhita,Vol.1.Reprint edition 2011,Chaukhambha Orientalia; Varanasi, India.(Jai Krishna das Ayurveda Series No.36).Cha.Vi.8/108-111p-379.
6. Sharma PV. CharakaSamhita,Vol.1. Reprint edition2011, ChaukhambhaOrientalia;Varanasi, India.(Jaikrishna das Ayurveda SeriesNo.36).Cha. Vi.8/112-115p-380.
7. Dr. Subhash Ranade, R.DeshapandeSharir Kriya Vidanan,Vol.II, Choukhamba Sanskrit Prathisthan, Reprint 2014,Chapter10,p 71.
8. Dr. P.S. ByadgiAyurvediyaVikrti–VijnanaandRogaVijnana,Vol.1, Choukhamba Bharti Academy, Reprint2017, Chapter19,p 449
9. Dr.NandiniDhargalkar,SharirKriyaVidanan,Vol.II,,ChoukhambaBhartiAcademy,Reprint2008,Chapter7.2,-p363
10. Dr. Ram Karan Sharma &Vd. Bhagwan Dash, Agnivesha'sCharaka Samhita text with English Translation & Critical Exposition, Volume II, Vimana Sthana 8/103, Choukhamba Sanskrit Series Office, Varanasi, Edition: Reprint 2018, Page.No.268.
11. Edited by Priya Vrat Sharma, Sushruta Samhita by Sushruta with English translation of text & the Commentary of Dalhanacharya, Sutra Sthana 35/16 ,ChaukhambhaVisvabharati Oriental Publisher & Distributors, Reprint:2010, Page No.332.
12. Pandit HemarajaSarma, Kashyapa Samhita by VruddhaJivaka with The Vidyotini Hindi Commentary, Sutra Sthana ,Lakshanadhyaya 28, Choukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi, Edition: Reprint, 2008, Page.No.54.
13. Dr. Ram Karan Sharma &Vd. Bhagwan Dash, Agnivesha'sCharaka Samhita text with English Translation & Critical Exposition, Volume II, Vimana Sthana 8/104, Choukhamba Sanskrit Series Office, Varanasi, Edition: Reprint 2018, Page.No.268.
14. Edited by Priya Vrat Sharma, Sushruta Samhita by Sushruta with English translation of text & the Commentary of Dalhanacharya, Sutra Sthana 35/16 ,ChaukhambhaVisvabharati Oriental Publisher & Distributors, Reprint:2010, Page No.332.
15. Dr. Ram Karan Sharma &Vd. Bhagwan Dash, Agnivesha'sCharaka Samhita text with English Translation & Critical Exposition, Volume II, Vimana Sthana 8/105, Choukhamba Sanskrit Series Office, Varanasi, Edition: Reprint 2018, Page.No.268,269.
16. Edited by Priya Vrat Sharma, Sushruta Samhita by Sushruta with English translation of text & the Commentary of Dalhanacharya, Sutra Sthana 35/16 ,ChaukhambhaVisvabharati Oriental Publisher & Distributors, Reprint:2010, Page No.332.
17. Dr. Ram Karan Sharma &Vd. Bhagwan Dash, Agnivesha'sCharaka Samhita text with English Translation & Critical Exposition, Volume II, Vimana Sthana 8/106, Choukhamba Sanskrit Series Office, Varanasi, Edition: Reprint 2018, Page.No.269.
18. Edited by Priya Vrat Sharma, Sushruta Samhita by Sushruta with English translation of text & the Commentary of Dalhanacharya, Sutra Sthana 35/16 ,ChaukhambhaVisvabharati Oriental Publisher & Distributors, Reprint:2010, Page No.332.
19. Dr. Ram Karan Sharma &Vd. Bhagwan Dash, Agnivesha'sCharaka Samhita text with English Translation & Critical Exposition, Volume II, Vimana Sthana 8/107, Choukhamba Sanskrit Series Office, Varanasi, Edition: Reprint 2018, Page.No.269.
20. Edited by Priya Vrat Sharma, Sushruta Samhita by Sushruta with English translation of text & the Commentary of Dalhanacharya, Sutra Sthana 35/16 ,ChaukhambhaVisvabharati Oriental Publisher & Distributors, Reprint:2010, Page No.332.
21. Dr. Ram Karan Sharma &Vd. Bhagwan Dash, Agnivesha'sCharaka Samhita text with English Translation & Critical Exposition, Volume II, Vimana Sthana 8/108, Choukhamba Sanskrit Series Office, Varanasi, Edition: Reprint 2018, Page.No.269.
22. Edited by Priya Vrat Sharma, Sushruta Samhita by Sushruta with English translation of text & the Commentary of Dalhanacharya, Sutra Sthana 35/16 ,ChaukhambhaVisvabharati Oriental Publisher & Distributors ,Reprint:2010, Page No.332.
23. Dr. Ram Karan Sharma &Vd. Bhagwan Dash, Agnivesha'sCharaka Samhita text with English Translation & Critical Exposition, Volume II, Vimana Sthana 8/109, Choukhamba Sanskrit Series Office, Varanasi, Edition: Reprint 2018, Page.No.270.
24. Edited by Priya Vrat Sharma, Sushruta Samhita by Sushruta with English translation of text & the Commentary of Dalhanacharya, Sutra Sthana 35/16 ,ChaukhambhaVisvabharati Oriental Publisher & Distributors ,Reprint:2010, Page No.332.
25. Dr. Ram Karan Sharma &Vd. Bhagwan Dash, Agnivesha'sCharaka Samhita text with English Translation & Critical Exposition, Volume II, Vimana Sthana 8/110, Choukhamba Sanskrit Series Office, Varanasi, Edition: Reprint 2018, Page.No.270.
26. Barnston, A.G.(1988)The effect of weather on mood, productivity and frequency of emotional crisis in a temperate continental climate. International Journal of Biometeorology, 32(1): 134-143.
27. Eftichiadis, A.(1995) Nature and Spirit. Athens{self-publishing}
28. Kalachanis, K. (2011) Environmental Impact on Health in the work of Hippocrates. Master Thesis, Postgraduate Program Environment and Health, Capacity building for decision making, University of Athens.