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THE CONCEPTUAL STUDY ON SHAT KRIYA KALA AND ITS APPLIED SIGNIFICANCE ON HUMAN BODY

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ABSTRACT :

Kriya Kala refers to the stages of disease progression and is often compared to the pathophysiology of illnesses. This term describes the timeframe during which a disease is either treated or prevented from advancing. Acharya Sushruta provides a detailed explanation of the concept of Shatkriyakala in the 21st chapter of Sutrasthana. The six stages of Shatkriyakala are Sanchaya, Prakopa, Prasara, Sthanasamshraya, Vyaktavastha, and Bhedavastha. "Shat" means six, "kriya" means activity or cure, and "kala" means period or era in Sanskrit. Therefore, "shatkriyakala" translates to "appropriate time periods to act or treat." Ayurveda's objectives are divided into two categories: maintaining health through practices such as Ritucharya, Dinacharya, and Sadvritta, and treating diseases using therapeutic methods.

KEYWORDS – Shat Kriya kala, Stages of Pathogenesis, Prevention of disease, etc.

INTRODUCTION :

Today's sedentary lifestyles, pollution, dietary habits, and other factors have contributed to the emergence of numerous new diseases worldwide. Disease arises when an individual fails to maintain internal equilibrium. Considering this, it has become essential to focus on preventing societal illnesses by utilizing proven Ayurvedic knowledge. Once a disease starts, it progresses through the six stages of Shat Kriya Kala, and identifying these stages is vital for both preventive and therapeutic aspects in Ayurveda. Acharya Sushruta's explanation of the Shat Kriya Kala stages provides insight into the current state of Doshadushti and the progression of physical diseases from their inception. This key Ayurvedic concept thoroughly explains both the treatment strategy and the stages of disease manifestation.[1]

According to Sushruta, disease treatment should commence at the appropriate time and should never be ignored. The Shat Kriya Kala method not only allows for the monitoring of disease progression but also provides guidelines on how to prevent the disease before it becomes a recognizable illness. This conceptual study was chosen to emphasize the significance of Shat Kriya Kala literature. The study tries to highlight and clarify the importance of this Ayurvedic concept.[2]

METHODOLOGY :

To conduct this study, content from the Ayurvedic Samhitas and their existing commentaries was gathered. Literary material was compiled from a variety of sources including periodicals, textbooks, research papers, and websites.

SHAT KRIYA KALA

- The term "Kriya" refers to an opportunity for action, while "Kala" signifies a period. Therefore, "Kriya Kala" indicates a specific time window for treatment during the progression of a disease.[3]
- The term "Kriyakala" appears twice in the Sushruta Samhita. For instance, in Sushruta Sutrasthana Adhyaya, "Kriyakala" is used in the context of Chikitsa Chatushtaya to denote the appropriate time for performing therapeutic procedures such as Snehadi and Chhedyadi Karma. This context emphasizes the precise timing for various treatments like Shamanachikitsa, Shodhanakarma, and Shastrakarma.[4]
- In Sushruta Sutrasthana Adhyaya 21, "Kriyakala" refers to the six stages of disease development, named Sanchaya, Prakopa, Prasara, Sthanasamshraya, Vyakti, and Bheda.

- Dalhana, a commentator on the Sushruta Samhita, described Kriyakala as "Chikitsavasara" or "Karmavasara," implying that choosing the appropriate therapeutic interventions depends on identifying the Avastha, or stage, of the disease process.[5]

According to Acharya Sushruta, there are six phases of dosha in the development of diseases:

1. Chaya
2. Prakopa
3. Prasara
4. Sthanasanshraya
5. Vyakti
6. Bheda

STAGES OF SHAT KRIYA KALA

SANCHAYA

The first phase of Kriyakala is Sanchaya, also known as Samhati Rupa Vriddhi. Sanchaya means "aggregation" or "gathering," referring to the accumulation of Doshas in their respective locations. This stage is characterized by an increase in the Dosha levels, leading the affected individual to develop aversions to certain things. It is crucial to treat the patient at this stage to prevent further deterioration.[6] Dalhana highlights two types of Vriddhi (Aggravation): Samhatirupa and Vilayanarupa. The symptoms of Dosha accumulation include:

- Vata Sanchaya Lakshana: Abdominal fullness and stiffness (Stabdhapoorna-koshtata).[7]
- Pitta Sanchaya Lakshana: Yellowish appearance (Pitavabhasata) and mild warmth (Mando ushamta).[8]
- Kapha Sanchaya Lakshana: Accumulation symptoms specific to Kapha.[9]

PRAKOPA

In the second stage, Prakopa, the Dosha continues to gather in its designated areas. Prakopa refers to the exacerbation of the Dosha due to the intake of inappropriate food (Ahara), regimen (Vihara), and medication (Aushadha). The Doshas then move to different parts of the body. Symptoms of this stage include:

- Vata Prakopa Lakshana: Abdominal discomfort and movement of Vata in the digestive system (Koshta toda sancharana).[10]
 - Pitta Prakopa Lakshana: Sour eructations (Amlika), excessive thirst (Pipasa), and body burning sensation (Paridaha).[11]
 - Kapha Prakopa Lakshana: Aversion to food (Annadweshya) and excessive mouth slobbering (Hridayotkledascha). Acharya Chakrapani and Hemadri describe two types of Prakopa:[12]
1. Chayapurvaka prakopa: Sequential accumulation leading to Dosha exacerbation.
 2. Without chayapurvaka prakopa: Rapid exacerbation without significant prior accumulation.

PRASARA

The term "Prasara" means "spreading to a larger region" or "active movement from their usual locations to new areas." In this stage, Doshas move from their initial locations to other parts of the body through various channels (srotas). Symptoms of this stage include:

- Vata Prasara Lakshana: Irregular bowel movements, flatulence, and atopy.[13]
- Pitta Prasara Lakshana: Sensations of boiling (Osha), pressing (Chosha), burning (Paridaha), and releasing smoke from the lips (Dhoomayanani).[14]
- Kapha Prasara Lakshana: Anorexia (Arochaka), vomiting (Chardi), lassitude (Angasada), and indigestion (Avipaka).[15]

There are 15 varieties in all.

- i. Vata Prasara
- ii. Pitta Prasara
- iii. Kapha Prasara
- iv. Rakta Prasara
- v. Vata Pitta Prasara
- vi. Vata kapha Prasara
- vii. Vata Rakta Prasara
- viii. Pitta kapha Prasara
- ix. Pitta Rakta Prasara
- x. Kapha Rakta Prasara
- xi. Vata Pitta Kapha Prasara
- xii. Pitta Kapha Rakta Prasara
- xiii. Vata Pitta Kapha Prasara
- xiv. Vata Kapha Rakta Prasara.
- xv. Vata Pitta Kapha Rakta Prasara.

1	Udara	Gulma, Vidradhi, Udara Roga, Agnisang, Anaha, Visuchika, Atisara,
2	Bastigata	Prameha, Ashmari, Mutraghata, Mutra Dosha etc.
3	Vrishanagata	Vridhhi.
4	Medragata	Niruddhaprakash, Upadamsha, Suka Dosha etc
5	Gudagata	Bhagandara, Arsha etc.
6	Urdhvajatrugata	Manifest Urdhvajatrugata Vikara.
7	Twaka, mamsa and shonitagata	Kshudraroga, Kushta, Visarpa etc.
8	Medagata	Granthi, Apachi, Arbuda, Galaganda, Alaji etc.
9	Asthigata	Asthi Vidradhi.
10	Padagata	Slipada, Vatasonita, Vatakantaka etc.

[References - Critical Review of ShatKriyakala: A Conceptual Study” Pramod F. Garje, Vasudha Sunil Umate, Ashish Y. Gotmare, Ayurline: International Journal of Research In Indian Medicine 2020;4(3) : 01 – 08]

STHANSANSHRAYA

During Sthansanshraya, the agitated Dosha begins to localize in specific areas of the body, leading to the manifestation of diseases characteristic to those areas. This localization occurs where there is already Srotodushti, obstructing the Dosha from passing through the small channels (srotas) as it travels. The Dosha settles in these areas, interacting closely with the affected Dushya (tissue) that has also undergone Vaishmya (abnormality). This interaction between the abnormal Dosha and Dushya is termed Dosha-Dushya Sammurchhana. Structural abnormalities begin to develop at this stage, manifesting as early symptoms (Purvarupa) of the impending disease.[16]

VYAKTI

Vyakti is the stage of disease manifestation, where clinical symptoms become evident and aid in identifying the specific illness. Dalhana categorizes this phase as crucial for diagnosing diseases based on their symptoms. Various terms are used synonymously to describe these manifestations, such as Rupa, Samsthana, Vyanjana, Linga, Lakshana, Chinha, and Akriti. Examples of diseases that manifest at this stage include inflammation (Shopha), tumors (Arbuda), cysts (Granthi), abscesses (Vidradhi), herpes (Visarpa), fever (Jwara), and diarrhea (Atisara).[17]

Vyakti stage is further categorized into:

- *Samanya Lakshanas*: Common signs and symptoms caused by elevated Doshas that are present across various ailments.
- *Pratyatma Lakshanas*: Unique or specific signs and symptoms that are characteristic of a particular disease.

BHEDA

Bheda marks the specific identification of the disease and its type based on the Dosha involved. This stage is crucial as it determines whether the disease will become chronic (chirakari) or incurable (asadhya). Bhedavastha involves the recognition of Dosha vikruti (abnormality) and the appropriate treatment required to halt the progression of the disease. According to commentators like Chakrapani and Dalhana, early detection and timely administration of medicines are essential for managing the illness effectively.[18]

The Shat Kriya Kala, consisting of Sthansanshraya, Vyakti, and Bheda, outlines the progressive stages of disease manifestation and identification in Ayurveda. Sthansanshraya describes the localization of Doshas in specific body areas, initiating the development of early symptoms. Vyakti is characterized by the appearance of clinical symptoms that aid in diagnosing the disease, categorized into common (Samanya Lakshanas) and specific (Pratyatma Lakshanas) signs. Finally, Bheda focuses on accurately identifying the disease type based on the Dosha involved, determining the prognosis and treatment approach. Understanding these stages helps in timely intervention and effective management of illnesses according to Ayurvedic principles.[19]

- Shodhana-Avatha
- Langhana and Pachana of the Madhy Dosha avastha, or Bahu Dosha

(Third Alpha Dosha Avasta-Sanshamana) The use of particular therapeutic interventions at each level of Shat Kriya Kala would be more efficient than this quick therapy technique.

Table - provides an explanation of these processes.

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

[References - Critical Review of ShatKriyakala: A Conceptual Study” Pramod F. Garje, Vasudha Sunil Umate, Ashish Y. Gotmare, Ayurline: International Journal of Research In Indian Medicine 2020;4(3) : 01 – 08]

DISCUSSION ON SHAT KRIYA KALA :

The concept of Shat Kriya Kala in Ayurveda provides a structured framework for understanding the progression of diseases and emphasizes the importance of timely intervention at each stage. This framework is analogous to the "disease cycle" or "natural history of illness" in contemporary medicine, highlighting its relevance across different medical paradigms.[20]

The initial stages of Shat Kriya Kala, Sanchaya and Prakopa, can be likened to the susceptibility or pre-pathogenesis stage in modern terms. Here, interactions between the individual and predisposing factors create conditions favorable for the onset of illness. Ayurveda underscores the importance of maintaining equilibrium among the Tridoshas (Vata, Pitta, Kapha), which are inherently prone to imbalance due to internal and external environmental changes.[21]

As the disease progresses through Sthanasanshraya and Vyakti stages, accumulated Doshas begin to manifest symptoms and localize in specific body areas. These stages mark the onset of prodromal symptoms, which aid in early diagnosis and treatment planning based on the clinical presentation of the disease.[22]

In Bheda, the final stage of Shat Kriya Kala, the disease either resolves with appropriate treatment or complicates if left unchecked. This stage underscores the critical role of identifying Dosha abnormalities and administering suitable therapies to prevent further disease progression.[23]

Ayurveda's approach contrasts with allopathic medicine in its emphasis on early detection of subtle imbalances before symptoms become pronounced. This proactive stance aligns with Ayurvedic principles of personalized medicine and preventive healthcare, where adherence to daily and seasonal regimens supports overall health and resilience.[24]

Understanding Shat Kriya Kala enhances clinical outcomes by guiding therapeutic interventions based on the dynamic interactions between Doshas, Dushyas (tissues), and Srotas (channels). This holistic approach not only addresses the symptoms but also targets the root cause of illness, promoting comprehensive healing and long-term well-being. Shat Kriya Kala provides a comprehensive framework that integrates ancient wisdom with contemporary medical insights, highlighting Ayurveda's systematic approach to disease management and its relevance in modern healthcare practices.[25]

CONCLUSION :

Shatkriyakala represents a unique and essential concept within Ayurveda. Understanding this sequential process allows for early intervention in the disease progression, thereby reducing the likelihood of complications. According to Acharya Sushruta, a physician's ability to recognize and assess the vitiated Dosha state empowers them to prescribe appropriate treatments effectively. In essence, a practitioner well-versed in Shatkriyakala not only diagnoses illnesses early but also manages them comprehensively according to the stages outlined. This systematic approach ensures that treatments are timely and tailored to the specific needs of the patient, aligning with Ayurvedic principles of personalized medicine and holistic health management. By leveraging the principles of Shatkriyakala, practitioners can optimize patient outcomes by addressing underlying imbalances before they manifest into full-fledged diseases. This proactive approach underscores the effectiveness of Ayurvedic medicine in promoting health and well-being through

preventive and therapeutic interventions. Shatkriyakala stands as a cornerstone of Ayurvedic practice, offering a structured framework that guides practitioners in understanding, diagnosing, and treating diseases in a holistic and timely manner.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST -NIL

SOURCE OF SUPPORT -NONE

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