

Cognitive Errors & Global Health Issues w.s.r to *Prajnapradha*- A Critical Study on *Charaka Samhita*.

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Abstract:

The people in modern world are vulnerable to cognitive errors in thinking & perception in their daily lives which prevent them from seeing things as they are and thinking & knowing them with required clarity and objectivity. Cognitive errors lead to prejudice and irrational thinking which prevent us from knowing ourselves & other and rationally weighing problems & situation. In present world cognitive errors and biases can prove costly as people make mistaken in making right choices & finding right solutions which can affect their personal and professional lives. Due to cognitive distortion people may choose unrighteous path, unwholesome dietary regimen & conduct, incompatible relationships, running behind momentary pleasure instead of permanent or absolute pleasure which in turn may be considered as the leading cause for prevalence of various global health issues. Various contemporary issue of present world like prevalence of life style disorders, pandemic situations, natural disasters etc are directly or indirectly related to intellectual blasphemy i.e. *Prajnapradha* in *Ayurvedic* Perspective. *Ayurveda*, the sacred science of divine origin has depicted *Prajnapradha* as the leading cause of all types of misery as well as distortion of harmony between people themselves and with nature. A critical study on *Charaka Samhita* is made by the author on the said topic for wide spread of comprehensive approach of *Ayurveda* to overcome cognitive distortion of people in modern world and prevent the contemporary global health issues.

Key Words: Cognitive error, *Prajnapradha*, *TrividhaDukha*, *JanapadaDhawmsa*, *Sadvritta*, *Satvabajaya*

Introduction:

In recent decades life style as an important factor related to various global health issues and it's one of the urgent need to address for reformation by the researcher. According to WHO, 60 % related factors to individual health and quality of life are correlated to unhealthy life style followed by cognitive distortion^[1]. Cognitive or intellectual error followed by adoptance of unhealthy life style leads million of people towards recurrent illness, physical or mental disability and even premature death. Today wide changes have occurred in life of all people as the people of modern world are vulnerable to cognitive errors in thinking & perception in

their daily lives. Cognitive error and intellectual blasphemy drive them away from the reality, and prevent them from weighing various problems & situations rationally. Indirectly it can prove costly for the people of modern world as they make mistaken in finding out right choice and right solutions in their personal & professional lives. Cognitive distortion followed by intellectual error prevent the individual to discriminate do and don'ts as a result of which improper utilization of senses cause malnutrition, over nutrition, addiction with unhealthy or incompatible diet, smoking, alcohol consumption, drug abuse, stress, technology addiction, excessive dependencies on gadgets etc which are the representation of unhealthy life style in present scenario.. Modern technology can bring us luxury but this materialistic comfort can be blessing or curse for the people of modern world. Current life style in young generations is a wakeup call for major health related issues. Exploitation of man's desire for sensual gratification, greed for money and power has lead to develop a multimillion dollar industry to providing sensual pleasure in all possible way and the people from young generation are being trapped and victimized in the process. In their desire to completely dominate everything around them, human have become the most violent being in the world. The tension, anxiety & fear arising from conflict are not only disruptive but continue to exert a constant drain in our well being physically & mentally. Hence in spite of all the advances made by science & technology, the present modern world is free from being safe and peace. Now we are in dire need of peace and choice of right objects in daily life by gradual rectification of cognitive distortions and restoration of steadiness of mental faculties not only in our personal life at home and work but also at global level. This concept of cognitive or intellectual blasphemy as a hidden cause for dissolution of in all aspect has been depicted under the term '*Prajnapradha*' in *Charaka Samhita*^[2]. *Prajnapradha* is one among the *Trividha Hetu* for manifestation of all miseries i.e. *Adhyatmika* (biological), *Adhibhoutika* (natural) or *Adhidaivika* (supernatural) in origin^[3].

Aims & objective:

- 1) Scientific Exploration of concept of cognitive error in reference to *Prajnapradha* in *Ayurvedic* Perspective.
- 2) Understanding its relevant role in individual as well as global health issues and for other mean of dissolution in present world as per the contextual reference of *Charaka Samhita*.
- 3) Implementation of comprehensive approach of *Charaka Samhita*, the Great compendium in *Ayurveda* for prevention of cognitive distortion at individual level and development of widespread of awareness in the community so as protect the whole world from various health issues and other mean of dissolution.

Material & Methods:

1) A systemic review of Charaka *Samhita* with *Chakrapani commentary* is done by the author to critically analyze and explore the concept of 'Prajnapradha' in reference to cognitive distortion in modern perspective

2) Contextual analysis is done from *Charaka Samhita* to understand its relevant role for gradual dissolution in different aspects in different ages and a critical study is made to understand its rationality in various health-related issues even in present-day context.

Review of Literature:

Ayurveda, the sacred science per excellence has been honored in all ages & eras as an indispensable guide for health and virtuous acts. No gift can surpass the gift of life. Being life-giver and as a motivating source of human beings to drive in a righteous path for attainment of human pursuits (*Purusartha*), it is sacred per excellence^[4]. With full of compassion and sense of equanimity to all living beings in the world and to ensure their safety and long life with restoring harmony with nature, the great preceptors of *Ayurveda* were devoted themselves to find out solutions in various community and global issues and protecting the whole world from dissolution^[5]. In present scenario, the populations in contemporary world are threatened by various global health issues, like decaying of life span by life style disorders, premature death, pandemic situations etc. Hence with sense of equanimity and compassion to the people of modern world, it's the best appropriate time to urgently address the various global health issues through exploring the silent cause for prevalence of life style disorders and by creating awareness from grass root level.

Ayurveda imparts the knowledge about life in both aspects which promotes and demotes longevity^[6]. Substances which are not conducive to longevity are not to be used and should be discarded. Both the aspects related to life i.e. *Sukhayu & Hitayu* are vital for sustenance of life of every individual and fulfillment of human pursuits. After a thorough review on both aspects i.e. *Hita & Sukha* what has been depicted by *Acharya Charaka* in *Sutra Sthana* 30 chapter, it is clearly evident that youth, enthusiasm, strength, luxurious articles with well-endued optimum physical & mental health are the representation of *Sukhayu* but these things cannot provide lasting happiness in the ultimate sense^[7]. Genuine happiness cannot be defined solely in terms of wealth, power, children, fame or inventions. Enjoyment with three desires of life like virtue, wealth, pleasure without affecting others, truthfulness, control over passion, serving to others, upliftment of spiritual power and acquisition of true knowledge etc are the representation of *Hitayu* which leads every individual towards a blissful life and the result of which retains in existing life and also credits to next life^[8]. *Sukha* aspects of life though essential for sustenance still it should be evaluated properly before indulging and indulged in a limit with getting full control over the passion. Most of the times we greatly dream about sense pleasure but afterwards it results in anticlimax in conclusion. Interestingly, there is enough pleasure in the world to keep us attached to all the troubles due to cognitive error. Eradication of all troubles can be possible by absolute detachment or getting control towards the various attachments by thorough discrimination under the purview of mental faculties^[9].

We cannot drive out worldly pleasure from our heart, but we can crowd them out. This world is a place of illusion and like a trap. In *BhagvatGeeta* verse no 8.15 lord Krishna says that this world is *Dukhalayam*, place of distress and everything attractive in the world are not false but all are the spark of my splendor and differentiate the momentary pleasure from ultimate or absolute pleasure by a beautiful illustration, if we compare an ocean to a few drops of water, Lord Krishna is like the ocean and the pleasures of this world are like drop of water. We do not deny the presence of drops rather we should focus on where these drops are taking us^[10]. Hence attainment of blissful life is the ultimate source of everlasting happiness. Attainment of *Sukha* without *Hita Sadhana* is fruitless. Intellectual blasphemy due to impairment of intellect, patience and memory of individual prevent to make right choice of objects and getting right solution in various issues which will be beneficial in ultimate sense for them. It may arise due to impulsive thinking, surface impression, and strong emotional attachment which lead the individual for immediate attachment without weighing the rationality of object.

Prajnapradha and Trividha Dukha:

In Sanskrit '*Prajna*' means superior knowledge of intelligence and '*Aparadha*' means offense/fault/error. Thus the term *Prajnapradha* means offense made by intellect^[11]. After critical analysis of the description of *Charaka Samhita Sharira Sthana* it is clearly evident that whatever the offense or unrighteous action made by intellect and reflected through our physical, mental or oral activities all are comes under the purview of improper functioning of mental faculties. Again improper functioning of mental faculties which lead to impairment of normal functioning of intellect are due to defective comprehension (*Dhi Vibhransa*), defective restraint(*Dhriti Vibhransa*) and defective recall or memory(*Smriti Vibhransa*)^[12].

Intelligence has the power of understanding or comprehension. Intellect normally views and understands the right perspective of object. But impairment of intellect causes defective comprehension which cannot discriminate in between eternal and ephemeral, harmful and useful or momentary & absolute pleasure. Hence without weighing the matter rationally and understanding its right perspective in ultimate sense, individual is instructed for incompatible or unwholesome attachment^[13].

Again in weighing the rationality of any subject matter in all aspect before indulging it, the role of mind is very important. Impairment of patience proceeded by defective restraint results quick indulgence of harmful objects in present materialistic world due lack of retention power^[14].

In most of the cases individual involved in the same attachment repeatedly in spite of getting experience about its ultimate result previously is mostly due to defective recall or remembrance about its result later. Impairment of recollection of knowledge of reality or self is due defective memory involve the individual in unwholesome attachment instead of awaking him^[15].

In a nut shell life style of a person is a cumulative effect of physical capacity coordinated with psychological functioning, displayed in the form of habits, behavior, dietary and living pattern. When initiation, control and coordination in between the mental faculties and intellect are disturbed it results derangement of life style of self and disturbs the harmony of nature and enhances the life style disorders in alarming rate. In present scenario the life style disorders are the miseries of *Adhyatmika (Atman Adhikritya)* in origin. Our injudicious physical, mental & oral action due impairment of function of mind, intellect and sense faculties solely responsible for manifestation of any ailments of somatic or psychosomatic origin^[16]. Even if ailments arising out of maturity of results of past action (*Karmaja Vyadhi*) are comes under intellectual blasphemy made by the individual in previous birth^[17].

In present scenario any ailments of *Adhidaivika* origin may be considered as supernatural which involves the ecological causes like seasonal impairment, natural calamities, some supernatural causes like god's wrath, curse of sages and time factor. From critical analysis of *Vimana Sthana 4* of *Charaka Samhita* it is revealed that the in virtuous acts made by the individual in existing as well as previous life is the unseen cause for manifestation of inauspiciousness in nature and destruction of population by curse^[18].

The ailments of *Adhibhautika* origin are considered as natural, some of them may arise from conflicts/wars preceded by greed, anger, attachment & ego of individual and some may due to attach of demons/creatures^[19]. From critical analysis of *Charaka Samhita*, it is clearly understood that in virtuous acts in society proceeded by intellectual error are due to lack of restraint, lack of self control over the passion, greed, anger etc. excessive indulgence in activities without self realization of own capacity and urge/requirements may cause instantaneous death^[20].

In present world prevalence of all diseases either of biological or supernatural origin is mainly due to indulgence of unhealthy life style preceded by excess, none or improper utilization of sense and lack of discrimination or distinguishing capacity of mind and intellect.

***Prajnapradha* as foremost cause among *Trividha Hetu*:**

Asatmendriyartha Samyoga, *Prajnapradha* and *Parinama* are recognized as *Trividha hetu* i.e., three-fold cause for manifestation of any ailments^[21]. While going through *Charaka Samhita* the above mentioned three fold causes have been described repeatedly in various contexts.

***Karma Samprapti* and *Prajnapradha*:** In some context the term *Prajnapradha* has been under the term improper utilization of '*Budhhi*' (mental faculties) and in some context it has been highlighted in reference to '*Karma*' (action) i.e. unrighteous or offensive physical, mental and oral activities^[22]. From critical analysis of the concept '*Prajnapradha*' it may be revealed that whatever the righteous or unrighteous activities *Kayika*, *Vachika* or *Manasika*, all are finally instructed by the intellect after due interpretation & analysis about detail aspect of the subject matter.

Asatmendriyatha Samyoga and Prajn pradha: As the quality of the product depend upon the ingredients and processing similarly quality of our activities depend upon the right choice for indulgence of wholesome objects(*Grahana*) as well as proper analysis about the detail aspect of the subject matter(*Vivechana*) before exploring^[23]. Impairment of intellect (*Buddhi Vibhransa*) cannot discriminate the right or wrong and impairment of retention power (*Dhriti Vibhransa*) promotes to indulge quickly without weighing the situation^[24]. Hence ultimately Intellectual error is unseen cause for the improper utilization of Sense faculties (*Asatmya Samyoga*) and cognitive distortion. Again the term '*Parinama*' has been depicted in classic as *Kala Parinama* or *Karma Parinama*.

Karma Parinama and Prajn pradha: Effect of *Karma* being made by the individual in existing or previous life is invariably reflected at any time of our life span. Rather the effect of past deed may be reduced to some extent by enrichment of present deed. Invariable involvement of effect of *Karma* as well as enjoyment of effect of good or badly action in life is accepted by Ayurveda^[25]. Invariable effect of *KarmaPhala* can be explored behind the manifestation of any exogenous or endogenous diseases of unknown origin. It has been clearly mentioned that predetermined life span is depend upon the excellence action of the previous and existing life^[26]. In present scenario disastrous effect of pandemic situations has affect those people who have actually committed to sins whereas others in the same community may escape from the disastrous effect of curse due to excellence of action. Even in reference to preventive approach for global pandemic issues, along with the preventive measure it has been emphasized on regeneration of morality and reformation of cognitive distortion caused by misused intelligence in every individual. The prevalence of epidemics may be weakened onwards to affect them by enrichment of their own deed.

Kala Parinama and Prajn pradha:

Kala is all powerful and self emerged and indispensable for sustenance of life in progressive order like origin, existence as well as dissolution of living beings are guided by the maturity of *Kala* ^[27]. Impairment of season is mostly due to changes in the feature of planetary bodies like Sun, Moon, Stars etc^[28]. *Charaka Samhita* clearly reveals that in virtuous acts preceded by intellectual blasphemy in existing as well as previous life is responsible for impairment of season and also to get rid from its disastrous effect^[29]. If life style will be maintained properly through proper seasonal regimen with due consideration of the effect *Kala* towards *Prakriti*, *Desha* etc the prevalence of seasonal disorders can be reduced to some extent. It needs up liftment of moral consciousness to discriminate the righteous or unrighteous seasonal regimen and conduct for adaptation of proper lifestyle while going through natural disasters or catastrophic conditions. Hence it needs to create awareness for rectification of intellectual blasphemy by different mean to rid from the adverse effect of *Kala Vikriti*.

Representation of unhealthy life style, lifestyle disorders and intellectual blasphemy:

Representation of irregular conduct in daily life of the people in present scenario is mainly due to intellectual pseudo-conception preceded by intellectual blasphemy.

Like 1) forceful stimulation of natural urges and suppression of the manifested one and non suppression of suppressible urges results the vitiation of different biological ailments and undue manifestation of anxiety, anger, worries etc. in present scenario undue manifestation of stress, anxiety etc seems to worsen or increase the risk of conditions like obesity, cardio-vascular disease, diabetes, depression, gastrointestinal problems and many more. Any type of undue exposure of physical, mental or oral activities is due to defective restraint and intellect.

2) Exhibition of undue strength (either *Ativyayam* or *Avyayama*), over indulgence of sexual act (*Ati Vyavaya*), addiction to incompatible diet (*Viruddha Ahara*), *Adhyasana*, *Visamasana*, *Pramitasana*, *Atimatrasana* etc in present life style due to cognitive distortion represent various systemic chronic disorder. Eradication of prevalence various systemic disorders in present world cannot possible only by administration of therapeutic measure. Until & unless the root cause for the evolution of disease is not understood and prohibited, the prevalence rate of any health issues in the society cannot be reduced.

3) Loss of honesty and good conduct, disrespect to respectable one, fear, anger, greed, ignorance, avoidance of healthy activities, movement any regard for temporal or local priority etc what have been observed in present generation are mainly due to their intellectual error^[30]. Without improper discrimination, analysis (*Vicharya*) and tentative assumption about the would be happenings (*Oohya*), people of modern world are running behind materialistic pleasure and indulged unwholesome dietary regimen and conduct in daily life style.

Discussion:

In a nut shell gradual decay of qualitative life due to gradual degradation of quality of diet and drink, premature death & aging, moral degeneration among the people of present society, social conflict, war, prevalence of unknown diseases of exogenous origin, natural disasters across the world what have been observed in present scenario, all are due to unrighteous or in virtuous action of the people of modern world. Manifestation of any type of un righteous action by any mean like physical, mental or oral, all these falls under the purview of mind. Hence restoration and upliftment of function of mental faculties by comprehensive approach of *Ayurveda* is urgent need to address the prevalence of various global health issues. Awareness should be done at grass root level for mass reformation in a particular community, society regarding enhancement of moral consciousness in individual so as to retain them from all misery.

It's urgent need to follow *Sadvritta* (universal law of conducts) as well as *Achara Rasayana* for reformation of cognitive and perceptual error which may prevent irrational thinking and perception among the people of present world. *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* is not only meant for treatment of psychosomatic disorder, but it is the ultimate mean for up liftment of *Satva* and deterioration of predominance of *Raja & Tama* which are the sole cause for all type of unwholesome attachment and defective restraint. Though it is almost impossible to free the mind completely from the errors and mental shortcuts, however effort should be made to improve thing and cognitive distortions through Ayurveda's comprehensive approach of ethical practice in daily life.

Conclusion:

“*Vasudhaivam Kutumbakam*”. Whole world is one family. Individual happiness is conducive to the happiness of society, happiness of the nation and whole universe. If whole universe as an immense net, each being is a single knot in this net. If we destroy one knot, the whole net is shaken. Awareness for rectification of cognitive error at individual level may protect the whole world from the in-virtuous effect caused by intellectual blasphemy. We must aware of the dangers and pit falls of the destructive forces of greed, hatred and delusion. Peace can never achieved by accumulating more wealth or gaining worldly power. We can develop and maintain inner peace only by turning our thoughts inwards instead of outwards. As soon as an individual realizes the fact that all the events are just consequences of the nature instead of identifying himself with various worldly events, absolute eradication of all miseries from the world can possible.

Conflicts of interest: Nil

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