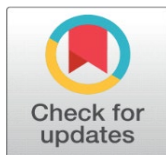


MANTRACHIKITSA: FACTS AS MENTIONED IN THE AYURVEDIC CLASSICS

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ABSTRACT

Mantra, indicates chanting of some prescribed verses for designated purposes, is a controversial but interesting and important topic. Scientific validation of mantra is difficult to establish due to the factors like - difficulty in (1) understanding the meaning of the verses, (2) understanding the mode of action, (3) understanding the effect scientifically etc. But traditional experience and classical references strongly support the use and efficacy of Mantra in different references. A number of researches are also already conducted in different levels with the aim to understand it scientifically. In the Ayurvedic classics a number of indications and benefits of Mantra are mentioned in different references like Vishachikitsa (in snakebite mentioned with top priority), Grahachikitsa (conditions that occur due to effect of some unseen, unidentifiable aetiologies etc.). The Ayurvedic scholars have discussed in detail about mantra with special reference to method of learning, practising etc. As a widely discussed noninvasive treatment procedure that is getting topmost priority in a condition like snakebite (a very dangerous and usually fatal poisoning) a discussion on Mantra basing upon the Ayurvedic classics is considered to be informative and thought provoking for the scientific forum.

Keywords: Mantra, Vishachikitsa, Ayurvedic Classics, Thought Provoking

1. INTRODUCTION

Since creation human beings and the living organisms suffered from a number of disturbing conditions of the physical and mental peace in different forms and strength. These conditions are designated as "Disease" that literary means and indicates "situation of disturbed ease (peace)". To get rid of such disturbing situations human beings have been continuously searching for remedial measures and found out a number of invasive and non-invasive techniques (treatment procedures). Among such techniques Mantra is also one that has been in practice since long past. Now-a-days Mantra is being practised by the traditional practitioners only. It is neither taught nor practised at the institutional level. Even,

as information available, Mantra is not recognised officially. Probably, no scientific forum has recognised the Mantra practitioners and its practice.

When the Ayurvedic classics viz. Charaka Samhita, Susruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya and Ashtanga Sangraha are studied it comes to the knowledge that, the authors of these important classics discuss in detail with top importance on the use of Mantra in even the serious and commonly fatal condition “Sarpavisha (snakebite)”. The Ayurvedic scholars mention it at the 1st position among the 24 Visha upakrama (treatment procedures). Observation and study reflect that, it is a non-invasive therapeutic procedure which is having miraculous efficacy in the condition.

As the treatment procedure is not officially recognised as scientific hence the author, through this article, expects to send a message to the scientific forum to conduct extensive study and research on the different aspects of Mantra as mentioned in the Ayurvedic classics to understand it’s actual value.

1.1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The present literary study to throw light on Mantra is conducted with the following aims and objectives –

- 1) To find out the descriptions on Mantra available in the Ayurvedic classics, especially Charaka Samhita, Susruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya and Ashtanga Sangraha
- 2) To organize the findings under specified headings to make it easily readable and understandable by the readers
- 3) To discuss the observations of the study in Ayurvedic light with the aim to understand the acceptability or otherwise
- 4) To give effort to understand the Ayurvedic concepts on the topic in modern light, if possible

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study was conducted by using the following materials and methods –

The authentic Ayurvedic classics Charaka Samhita, Susruta Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya and Ashtanga Sangraha were used as material for the study.

To conduct the study the following method was followed -

The mentioned classics were studied to collect the informations available on Mantra

- 1) The informations collected were organized pointwise
- 2) Effort was made to justify the concepts in classical light
- 3) Effort was also made to justify the classical concepts on mantra in modern light
- 4) All the findings on the topic mentioned in the aims and objectives were arranged in the form of a scientific article
- 5) Ultimately, adding the references, the article was sent to popular peer reviewed journal for publication with the aim to appraise the scientific society about the concepts of the Ayurvedic classics on Mantra.

3. OBSERVATION AND RESULT

The study revealed the below mentioned observations –

- **CHARAKA SAMHITA:** The search in Charaka Samhita reflected the following findings in relation to Mantra –
 - 1) Mantra is mentioned as the 1st among the 24 Visha Upakrama (24 treatment procedures of poisoning) [Dwivedi \(2020\)](#)
 - 2) In the patients affected with Jangama Visha (animate poisons) application of arishtabandhana (tourniquet), Avamarjana (massaging towards downwards from the site of bite) and Atmaraksha (protection of the patient's life) should be done by using Mantra [Dwivedi \(2020\)](#)
- **SUSRUTA SAMHITA:** In Susruta Samhita the following facts were found in relation to Mantra and Mantrachikitsa –
 - 1) A mantrabid (person expert in mantra chikitsa) should apply Arishtabandhana (tourniquet) by chanting mantra [Mitra \(2019\)](#)
 - 2) Mantra is founded and advised by the Satyabadi, tapaswi Rishi etc. (the wise persons who practise truth, good conducts and self-controlling procedures). Hence, they never fail. They can even destroy the dangerous, harmful effects of the strongest poison. There is no any medicine / procedure that can act like Mantra to neutralize the effect of the potent poison [Mitra \(2019\)](#)
 - 3) An individual should learn Mantra by avoiding stree, mamsa, madhu etc. (keeping away from contact with females, taking meat, wine etc.) , practising mitahara , suchita , kushastaranashayina (taking limited and controlled food , practising holiness , sleeping on bed made of kusha – one type of holy grass) . For mantrasiddhi (to get the beneficial effects of mantra) gandha , malya , upahara , bali etc. should be offered to the Gods and puja should be made with japa , homa etc. (different types of flowers , scented substances , offerings , prayer etc.) [Mitra \(2019\)](#)
 - 4) Though mantra has potency it fails if used in improper way or pronounced with inappropriate pronunciation etc. (Avidhina prokta hina va swarabarnatah) [Mitra \(2019\)](#)
- **ASHTANGA HRIDAYA:**

During the study of Ashtanga Hridaya no detail discussion on Mantra was found.

- **ASHTANGA SANGRAHA:**

From study of Ashtanga Sangraha the following informations on Mantra were found –

- 1) No Aushadhaprayoga (application of medicine) can act on Visha (poison) as quickly and effectively as the Mantra used (chanted) by a satya, brahma, tapomaya purusha (a person who practise truth, religious performances and prayer, meditation etc.). On the other hand, everyone may not have bhashajasampada (quality medicine). In some conditions (especially when the cause of the disease is not known) medicine application becomes difficult. When Bisha is nutrized by using medicine only there is every chance of prakopa again (relapse). But if it is nutrized using Mantra the chance of punah prakopa (relapse) reduces. But if Mantra is used by bratahina purusha (who does not practise holi habits) or with hina swarabarna etc.

- (inappropriate pronunciation) then it also fails. Hence for bishachikitsa (treatment of poisoning) agada (antidote) etc. are needed. [Mitra \(2019\)](#)
- 2) In poisoning, for application of Bandha (aristabandhana -tourniquet) etc. Mantra should be used. There is no other medicine / measure that can act like Mantra [Thakral \(2019\)](#)

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study can be discussed as follows –

- 1) Charaka Samhita and Susruta Samhita have discussed in detail on Mantra and Mantrachikitsa in their samhita. But the description of Susruta Samhita is seemed to be more detail and descriptive. Charaka has given a very short idea throwing light on its indication only whereas Susruta has thrown light on its special indication, origin, procedure of learning and practising etc. to get the expected benefit, causes of failure of mantrachikitsa etc.
- 2) In the Ayurvedic classics it is said that each substance (Dravya) has got the capacity to act (karma). A substance works by virtue of its taste (Rasa), quality (property) (goona), potency (a specific strength to act) (veerya), state attained after digestion (vipaka) and a strength to act that cannot be understood or explained (prabhava). Activity of the substance is determined by any one or more of these 5 factors. Among the mentioned 5 the relation of the first 4 with the action can be understood and explained. But the mode of action of the 5th one i.e. Prabhava can neither be understood nor explained. The effect of Mantra can also not be explained, but as claimed, it shows miraculous effect. Hence the active strength of Mantra can be understood only with the help of Prabhava which cannot be showed in any way.
- 3) From the instructions given in reference to the origin and source of Mantra it can be assumed that, these are the verses founded and advised by the wise, dedicated, trustworthy persons with strong personality practising the good conducts. From this aspect it can be assumed that, the efficacy of Mantra is also dependent upon the faith of the person upon whom it is applied and to get faith from others one must have some superior qualities. The rules advised to a learner of Mantra also support the same fact.

It is well established that, there is a close relation between the body and the mind. A person with strong mind can tolerate even strong sufferings and a weak minded individual breaks with mild sufferings.

In relation to snakebite, evidence supports that, major percentage of casualty is due to fear, not due to venom. Snakebite causes panic to the patient and the family members, relatives, neighbours etc. The person considers the induction of “sure death” to him and ultimately breathes last. Hence one of the prime important treatments to provide to such patients is “consolation”/ “boosting up of his mental strength” (giving faith that the poison injected to him will not be able to cause any harm). For the purpose chanting of verses by a person towards whom there is social respect and faith is important.

- 4) Susruta has also given stress on chanting the Mantras with proper pronunciation, rhythm by following some rules and regulations. As known pronunciation is important to understand the meaning and purpose of use of the words. Specially in relation to the Sanskrit language it is said that, these words have got the capacity to produce some vibrations in the environment which effect on the mind of the listener. Listening and getting

exposure to the vibration produced by the words stimulates the mind. A word of positive meaning can give strength to the listener whereas opposite one can effect in the other way. The Mantras that are chanted with special purpose contain the positive meanings. Hence it can be assumed that listening Mantra for a special purpose from a faithful individual can eliminate the suffering of a person.

5. SUMMARY

As the summary of the study the following points can be stated –

- 1) Mantra is a non-invasive treatment procedure that is advised to utilise by the Ayurvedic classics in very serious conditions like snakebite.
- 2) Mantra is considered to be founded and advised by some eminent personalities with healthy practice and strong personality
- 3) To learn and practise Mantra one has to follow some rules and regulations and frame his personality at some different level than the others.
- 4) The mode of action of Mantra is unexplainable with the scientific reasonings etc. It can only be done hypothetically.
- 5) To speak in favour or against the efficacy of Mantra systematic study can be considered as the demand of the time
- 6) An effort to establish the relationship between the protective endocrine secretions with Mantra may be helpful to understand the utility of Mantra for treatment.

6. CONCLUSION

As conclusion of the study it can be said that, Mantra is a treatment procedure being used since time immemorial the scientific mode of action of which cannot be explained with reasoning. It is being trusted and used since long past claiming to be effective even in some serious conditions like snakebite, hence needs scientific evaluation. Attention of the academicians and researchers on the point may prove to be a valuable boon to the society.

CONFLICT OF INTERESTS

None.

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