



Utility of Pramana in Ayurveda – A Review

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda has inculcated many principles from *darshana shastra*. *Pramana* is one such principle which is widely used in *Ayurveda* with certain modifications in its applicability. With the keen observation and analytical skill the ancient sages identified the *pramana* as the tool to gain thorough knowledge. *Ayurveda* has adopted *pramana* namely *aptopadesha*, *pratyaksha*, *anumana*, *yukti* along with other types. The word *pramana* and *pariksha* are used synonymous in *Ayurveda*. Systematical analysis and gaining the exact knowledge is *pariksha*. Vast application of these can be seen in the treatises. Thus a literary review is taken up as an attempt to understand the utility of *pramana* in *Ayurveda* with respect to understand the basic concepts, field of research, diagnosis and treatment of disease is done.

Keywords: *Atopadesha*; *anumana*; *pariksha*; *pramana*; *pratyaksha*; *yukti*.

1. INTRODUCTION

Ancient India is the abode of the intellectuals and great thinkers. Their keen observations and analytical skills at gross and subtle level, lead to compose treatises on complex subjects in the absence of sophisticated instruments with accuracy. Ayurveda physicians of the past established the tools of knowledge i.e. *pramana* which proved to be an excellent tool to gain knowledge then and even now. Thus, the ancient physicians, with their high levels of intelligence, and extra ordinary skills of observation, and interpretation achieved intellectual phenomenon with the help of *pramana*.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Literary review from *Ayurveda samhita* namely Charaka Samhita & Sushruta Samhita.

2.1 Literary Review

Pramana is a tool through which true knowledge is gained. It has several synonyms like *upalabdhi*, *sadhana* (tool), *jnana* (knowledge), *pariksha* (evaluation) [1]. The word *pramana* and *pariksha* are used synonymously in *Ayurveda*. The term *pariksha* has been defined as systematical analysis and gaining the *pratipatti jnana* (exact knowledge). *Aptopadesha*, *pratyaksha*, *anumana* and *yukti* are the fourfold examination techniques mentioned in *Charaka Samhita*. Whereas in *Sushruta Samhita*, the *pratyaksha*, *aptopadesha*, *anumana* and *upamana* are mentioned as *pramana*. Apart from these, *arthapatti*, *abhava*, *aitihya*, *sambhava*, *cheshta*, *parishesha* are also considered in different contexts. A few references for *pramana/pariksha* is found in *bruhatrayi* in the contexts of proving the *paraloka*[2], examination of disease and diseased [3,4,5,6], tools to gain knowledge[7,8].

Aptopadesha are the *tarka rahita* (doubtless), *nischaya* (definite), *yathartha jnana* (absolute knowledge) provided by the *aptas*[9], also considered as *agama* i.e. *Veda*[10] (knowledge). The knowledge that arises of the combined effort and interaction between the *artha* (object), *indriya* (sense organ), *manas* (mind) and *atma* (soul) at that moment is called as *pratyaksha*. *Anumana* is the inferential knowledge based on valid information with previously perceived knowledge (*pratyaksha*) with the help of *yukti* and *tarka*. The inferential knowledge that one arrives after a careful introspection of various cohesive factors is defined as *yukti*[11]. The knowledge gained by comparing an unknown object with known is called as *upamana* [12]. The

relevant hidden and unexplained meaning through the mentioned reference can be obtained through *arthapatti pramana*[13]. If one statement is placed, certain other relevant references are also understood which are the part of the former is considered as *sambhava* [14]. The knowledge of absence or non existence is obtained through *abhava pramana*. *Cheshta pramana* is the tool to elicit through the different expressions, movements and postures.

3. DISCUSSION

Pratyaksha and *anumana* are the bifold examination for a scholarly person. For others *aptopadesha* with the above two constitute the methods of examination; by incorporating all these, conclusion can be drawn through *yukti pramana*. *Ayurveda* has inculcated many principles from *darshana shastra*. *Pramana* is one such principle which is widely used in *Ayurveda* with certain modification in its applicability. *Ayurveda* emphasize on *Trividha pramana viz. pratyaksha, anumana and aptopadesha* and all others can be subsudated in these three as *aitihya pramana* under *aptopadesha pramana*, *upamana pramana* under *pratyaksha* and *anumana, sambhava, bhava, arthapatti* under *anumana pramana*; *abhava pramana* under *pratyaksha pramana*. Several *pramana* quoted in *darshana* are considered in *Ayurveda* in different context as depicted in (Table 01).

3.1 Understanding of the Basic Concepts of Ayurveda and its Application

Ayurveda is an *agama shastra* in the form of *trisutra*. *Aptopadesha* is the base for all other *pramana*, it is the authentic source of practical knowledge and application. *Loka purusha samya siddhanta*, similarity is present in the universe and physical body, based on this the aggravation and depletion of the body contents can be corrected. In *punarbhava nirupana* it is inferred as the action performed in the previous life called as *daiva* are unavoidable, eternal and has continuity. Its result corresponds to the action, which is the causative factor for the *karmaja vyadhi*. *Adharma* is considered as the root cause for the *janapadodhvamsa vyadhi* [15]. The understanding of epidemic and pandemic diseases can be attributed to all these *pramana*. Assessment of *Ayu* (lifespan) is based on the *anguli pramana* (anthropometry) [16,17] in *svastha* (healthy) and *arishta lakshana* in *rogi*

(diseased) [18] is done through *pratyaksha*, *aptopadesha*, *yukti*. *Drushta karma* is considered as one of the required qualities of *bhishak* (physician), knowledge about internal organs is achieved through *shavacheda*[19] and surgical skills has to be practiced in the experimental models[20].

3.2 Examination of Disease and Diseased

Trividha and *ashtavidha rogi pariksha* (examination of patient), confirms their roots in the *pramana*. *Darshana* and *sparshana* incorporates *pratyaksha*, whereas *prashna* incorporates *aptopadesha*. The physical and psychological states are assessed by *anumana pramana*. Clinical utility of these, is explained in an elaborated manner in *trividha roga visheshavijnaniya adhyaya* of *Charaka Samhita*

Roga pariksha (diagnosis) is based on *nidana panchaka* which depends on *pramana*. The diagnosis, prognosis, planning and assessment of treatment are based on *trividha pramana*. Before arriving at a conclusion with regard to diagnosis or treatment of a disease, it is essential to contemplate on the teachings of the seers as it helps in gaining the exact knowledge[21]. *Aptopadesha pramana* guides in identifying the *anukta vyadhi* through *nidana*, *adhishtana* and *svabhava* of *roga*. Considering the patient as *apta*, *prashna pariksha* identifies the subjective state of health or disease[22]. The diagnosis and estimation of the prognosis is done through *pratyaksha pramana* eg. *haridra varna* in *kamala*, *gurghuraka shabda* in *tamaka shvasa*, *puti puya gandha* in *vrana*, *sheeta*, *karkasha* etc. *sparsha* in *shotha*. *Anumana pramana* helps in diagnosing a disease based on *purvarupa*, complications and fatal signs and symptoms. *Rasanendriya pariksha* is attributed through *anumana pramana* which helps in assessing *arishata lakshana* in certain diseases by observation of whether the insects like *makshika*, *yuka* etc. gets attracted towards the sample of urine, body parts etc[23]. *Yukti pramana* is a tool for assessment of *kriyakala* (stages of diseases), fixing time and dose of medicine. Identification of diseases like *kushta*, *visarpa*, *bhagandara*, *prameha pidaka* are classified based on *dosha's* are named by giving simile of different fruits or parts of animals, eg. *rishyajihoa*, *ushtragreeva*, etc.) Identifying the nature of disease like the swelling in *kroshtuka shirsha vyadhi* is similar to head of an animal called *kroshtuka*. In *gradhrasi vata* the gait will be similar to that of *gradhra* (vulture). In understanding effectiveness of treatment like *eranda taila* is compared to *kesari*

in treating the *amavata* which is like *gajendra*. *Yukti*, *aptopadesha* are the vital aids necessary for arriving at a precise diagnosis and effective treatment strategy.

3.3 Understanding the Research Methodology

There are several references of research protocol in classics, like identification of drugs, disease (*anukta vyadhi*), survey study, clinical research in the form of several formulations to one disease and single formulation for many diseases, animal studies like *anna raksha vidhi*. Scope for survey and observational studies are highlighted eg., excess use of *kshara*, *lavana*, *pippali*; *viruddha ahara* etc. thus *aptopadesha pramana* is useful in selecting the topic and identifying the solution. In the field of research *pratyaksha* and *yukti pramana* plays a pivotal role along with *anumana pramana* which helps in designing the protocol to preparation of the report. Drug, clinical, experimental researches are mainly based on *yukti* and *pratyaksha*. Survey studies, analysis of the pharmacodynamics of the drug are based on *anumana pramana*. Entire research can be explained with *paratha anumana* using *pancha avayava vakya*.

3.4 Utility of other pramana in Ayurveda with its Clinical Application

Arthapathi pramana can be considered in understanding *upashaya* (relief) and *anupashaya* (aggregation). The formation of *upadhatu* like *stanya* and *artava* from *rasa dhatu* and assessing the *rasa dhatu dushti* in the diseases of *artava* and *stanya*; manifestation of *vyadhi due to nidana sevana* can be considered under *sambhava pramana*. *Abhava* (non-availability) of certain signs and symptoms helps in differential diagnosis and final diagnosis. *Vyadhi mukta lakshana* like in *jvara*, *unmada*, *atisara*[24] etc. The *ayoga* of *indriyarthas*, *karma* and *kala* are considered as causative factors for disease. These suggest the utility of *abhava pramana*. *Cheshta* is considered as the method to diagnose the disease through expression and actions. It helps in diagnosis of *sharirika* and *manasika vyadhi*. eg. *bhibhatsa cheshta* (involuntary movement) along with the feature of loss of memory and darkness can be observed in *apasmara*, cardinal feature of *sanyasa*, *arishata lakshana* can be understood as in *unmada*. Activities like frequent touching of painful body parts by the child[25] suggest certain pediatric illness.

Table 1. Contexts of different *pramana* in *samhita*

Sl.	Context	Utility	Pramana
1.	<i>Vada Marga</i>	Tools to gain knowledge	<i>aitihya, pratyaksha, anumana, sambhava, arthapathi, upamana, arthapatti</i>
2.	<i>Tantrayukti</i>	Understanding Text	<i>chesta, abhava</i>
3.	Differential diagnosis	Understanding the disease	

4. CONCLUSION

Thus all the *pramana* play an important role in fulfilling the need of *Ayurveda* to maintain the health, diagnosis and treatment of the diseases and attain the *chaturvidha purushartha* in the form of:

- Pariksha* to understand the *triskandha* of *Ayurveda* which are *hetu, linga* and *aushadha*.
- Tantrayukti* to understand the *tantra*.
- Tattva jnana* to establish the facts like *punarbhava*
- To plan and performing research.

The ancient concept of evidence is based on fourfold testing, called *pramana*. However, it must be emphasized that fruitful strategies for developing new scientific evidence cannot succeed if traditional primary evidence is ignored. New research and understanding of the new diseases and its treatment is to be planned on the foundations of existing textual and experience-based evidence.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study highlights the efficacy of "PRAMANA" which is an ancient tradition, used in some parts of India. This ancient concept should be carefully evaluated in the light of modern medical science and can be utilized partially if found suitable.

DISCLAIMER

The products used for this research are commonly and predominantly use products in our area of research and country. There is absolutely no conflict of interest between the authors and producers of the products because we do not intend to use these products as an avenue for any litigation but for the advancement of knowledge. Also, the research was not funded by the producing company rather it was funded by personal efforts of the authors.

CONSENT

It is not applicable.

ETHICAL APPROVAL

It is not applicable.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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