A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE KAARYA-KAARANA SIDDHAANTA (THEORY OF CAUSE AND EFFECT) IN AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

The Indian Philosophy is known for its contribution towards the spiritual acumen but a little is known about the hidden science in the form of ‘philosophical code’. In fact, the Indian Philosophy has influenced the various knowledge streams of Indian origin like the science of Yoga and Ayurveda. The theory of cause (kaarana) and effect (kaarya) is quintessential example of the contribution of philosophical narrative that forms the base of all the scientific developments and the enhancement of knowledge vistas of the well known ancient holistic science of life, Ayurveda. The relation between the cause and effect is a widely approved concept paving the way of Ayurveda thinking. The concept of health, disease and its treatment are developed on the anvil of the cause-effect model. The theory of transformation is applied in the scientific study of the digestive mechanism and the failure to transform properly is termed as disease that demands the Ayurveda interference. Even the highly discussed modern concept of research in Ayurveda is based on the cause-effect relationship. This paper therefore reviews the theory of cause and effect and its application in understanding the Ayurveda model.

KEY WORDS: Philosophy, health, disease, treatment, basic-principles, transformation, research.
INTRODUCTION

The relation of the cause and the effect known as the kaarana- kaarya Siddhaanta in Ayurveda and Indian Philosophy has been instrumental in the human quest for knowledge. The intellect is assigned the function of analysis of all the happenings with the background of the search for the unknown in the form of the cause and effect. It is a universal truth that there is a cause for every effect. Whether this cause is known or unknown, there is no doubt regarding the existence of the cause. The science and research is nothing more than the establishment of the relation of the cause and effect. Sir Issac Newton saw the effect in the form of the falling of an apple which led to the search of its cause in the form of the ‘gravitational force’. The adage ‘Necessity is the mother of invention’ can be understood in terms of the cause-effect relationship. The effect desired is produced by the search and application of suitable cause while the search for the cause is mandatory to understand the effect produced thereof.

The theory of the cause (Kaarana) and effect (Kaarya) has been accepted as the Sarvatantra Siddhaanta (widely approved principle).

Ayurveda like all the other sciences is no exception to this as the seers of yore have given utmost importance to the principle of the cause & effect. The trisootra Ayurveda includes the hetu, limga and aushadha. [1] Here, hetu means the cause which will lead to the health or disease which is the effect. Thus, the cause-effect relationship lies at the root of the Ayurveda thinking in the approval of the most fundamental concept of the trisootra Ayurveda.

All the seers and scientists accept the theory of the cause and effect but the manner of explanation of the relation between the cause & effect differs which is termed as Vaada (postulation) in Ayurveda classics.[2] This difference of opinion amongst various seers is valid as there are many ways to reach the destination. The choice of the way depends on the person pursuing the path. The opinion which suits an individual becomes his course which may not be the only true path but it is one of the ways to reach the final goal. The evolution of the various schools of philosophy also indicates the same as the final destination of salvation is approved by all but the ways to attain the same differs from one school to other.

So, before pondering over the different opinions and theories explaining the relation of the cause with the effect, it is mandatory to explain the concept of cause (Kaarana) and the effect (Kaarya).
THE CONCEPT OF KAARANA (CAUSE)

The cause is that which does act. It is therefore the cause of action as it is the actor/doer per se. Chakrapaani, the revered commentator of Charaka Samhita adds to this meaning as he proposes the self-sufficient nature of the Kaarana/achiever. [3] Going by this definition, the Kaarana with reference to Ayurveda must be the physician. The philosophical school of Nyaaaya explains the Kaarana (cause) as that which is directly related to the Kaarya/effect and is always prior to the effect i.e. the non-manifested state of the Kaarya/effect is the Kaarana. Thus, it proposes the compulsory existence of the cause for the effect manifested.[4]

The three types of Kaarana (cause)

There are three varieties of the cause viz. Samavaayi (Material cause), Asamavaayi (Non-material cause) and Nimitta Kaarana (Instrumental cause).[5]

The material cause or the inseparable cause is that which inherently produces an effect. [6] Therefore, it is an essential cause always associated with the effect. It is important to note that this is always the substance not the inherent quality. Example – The thread is the material cause for the cloth.

The non-material cause is that which is either associated with the effect or the cause in an inherent manner. [7] It is always a quality and cannot be the substance. Example – The combination of the threads to produce a cloth. The dosha- dushya sammurchanaa (association of the dosha- dushya) is the non-material cause of the disease.

The supporting cause or the instrumental cause is that which is not inherently associated either with the material cause or the effect. [8] This cause disassociates itself once the effect is produced.

Example – The diagnostic tools that assist a physician are the instrumental cause. Likewise, the faulty dietary and life style related factors are the instrumental cause of the disease.

THE KAARYA (EFFECT)

Charaka defines effect as the objective for which the doer initiates an action. [9] Therefore, Kaarya in Ayurveda is the attainment of dhaatusaamya (homogeneity of the tissues or health).
THE RELATION OF THE CAUSE AND EFFECT (The Kaarya-Kaarana Siddhaanta)

There is a unanimity regarding the presence of the cause for an effect but there is a difference of opinion when it comes to the point of the relation between the cause and the effect. The various theories explaining the relation between the cause and effect is tabulated below-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of the Philosophical School</th>
<th>Relation between the cause and effect</th>
<th>Name of the theory/relationship</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><em>Baudhha</em> School</td>
<td>Cause- Non-existent ∫ Effect</td>
<td><em>Kshanabhangurvaada</em> (Theory of Momentary existence)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Nyaaya &amp; Vaisheshika</em> Schools</td>
<td>Existent cause ∫ Non-existent/New effect</td>
<td><em>Asatkaaryavaada/Aarambhavaada</em> (Theory of generation/production of an effect)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Saamkhya</em> School</td>
<td>Existent cause ∫ Existent effect</td>
<td><em>Satkaaryavaada</em> (Theory of actual Transformation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>Vedaanta</em> School</td>
<td>Existent cause ∫ Illusory effect</td>
<td><em>Vivartavaada</em> (Theory of Illusory manifestation)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Applied aspect of the relation of the cause and effect (The Kaarya-Kaarana Siddhaanta)**

The relation of the cause and effect is ubiquitous in *Ayurveda*. The widely applied theory is the theory of actual transformation proposed by the *Saamkhya* philosophy known as the *Parinaamavaada* (Transformation). This theory proposes the existence of the effect/*Kaarya* in the cause/*Kaarana* itself. There is mere transformation of the cause into the effect and the manifestation of effect is not a new phenomenon. The effect is existent even before the causal operation.

The philosophy of *Ayurveda* approves the theory of transformation. The phenomenon of physiological and pathological transformations illustrates the acceptance and utility of the theory of transformation in *Ayurveda*. Even the modern sciences approve this theory. The renowned principle of conservation of energy is the best example of the *Parinaamavaada*. The principle of conservation of energy proposes the actual transformation of one form of energy to other.
The utility of theory of transformation (Parinaamavaada in Ayurveda)

a. The transformation of the food or the physiology of digestion – The food ingested undergoes continuous transformation from one state to other. This transformation occurs in three stages viz. The Madhura avasthaa paaka is the first stage in which the six tastes of the food ingested manifest as the sweet in the first state of the digestion. Thus, this transformation leads to a physiological increase in the Kapha dosha. The second state is the Amla avasthaa paaka in which the food undergoing digestion process, now becomes dominant in the amla rasa and therefore an increase in the pitta is seen. Katu avasthaa paaka is the last and final stage of transformation which leads to an increase in the Vaata dosha. This process of transformation is brought about by the six factors of transformation that include the heat, air, moisture, unctuousness, time and appropriate combination.

b. Foetal development – The stages of development of the foetus is an important parameter of the practical demonstration of the transformation. The fertilization of the ovum by the potent sperm i.e. Zygote gets transformed into various forms finally giving birth to a baby. The month wise development indicates a transformation from the non-manifested state to a manifested state. The organs and sub-organs in the un-manifested state are transformed into the manifested state. Similarly, the chromosomal abnormality quoted as the vitiation of the seed (beeja bhaaga dushti) manifests itself as the deformities.

The application of the theory of illusory transformation (Vivartavaada)

The transformation which is not real/true is termed as Vivarta while the real is termed as vikaara. Ayurveda indirectly mentions the illusory phenomenon at various places like the causative factor of all the diseases specified as Prajnaaparaadha defined as the misjudgement of the real to be unreal and the good to be bad and vice versa. The disease of Atattvabhinivesha i.e. the erroneous misjudgement of the entity is due to the vitiation of intellect, a person mistakes unreal to be real and vice versa.

Ayurveda and the applied aspect of Aarambhavaada

Ayurveda classics bear a number of references that approve of the Aarambhavaada, some of them mentioned under

i. Origin and development of the foetus - The garbhafoetus is a product of six dhaatus/factors. These six factors combine and produce a new effect hitherto absent. The maatrija (maternal), pitrja (paternal), sattvaja (mental), saatmyaja (conducive), rasaja
(nutritional) and aatmaja (spiritual) factors unite and cause the growth and development of the foetus.

ii. The Ayu (life span) – The crux of discussion in Ayurveda i.e. the life span is the result of combination of the physical body, sense organs, psyche and soul. [18] The special combination of these four factors produces the life span. Each of the causative factors differ from the effect produced, thus the combination generates a new effect.

iii. The pathogenesis i.e. origin of a disease – The origin of a disease can be explained as an example of Aarambhavaada as the combination of specific etiological factors along with the condition of the body entities produce disease manifested in varied forms. [19]

iv. The Yukti (plan) – The treatment plan devised by the practitioner is a unique method to tackle the particular manifestation of the disease. All the four limbs of treatment viz. doctor, medicine, nurse and the patient have to act in unison reasonably to make an effort of treating the disease. [20]

Ayurveda and the applied aspect of Kshanabhanguravaada (The theory of the momentary existence) - Ayurveda is a holistic system of medicine and has developed by accepting and altering the various theories of philosophies according to its needs. The Kshanabhanguravaada seems to have been approved in some instances but strongly refuted elsewhere.

Instances of approval of Kshanabhanguravaada

a. Perpetual depletion of Ayu – The synonym of the Ayu (life span) is nityaga meaning continuous depleting/passing. This approves the Kshanabhanguravaada. [21]

b. Natural destruction (Swabhaavoparamavaada) – Charaka approves the theory of natural destruction which proposes the depletion/destruction of all the mortal entities by their inherent nature itself. [22] Nothing is permanent and everything undergoes the three stages of origin, existence and death. This postulate also goes well with the Kshanabhanguravaada.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The theory cause and effect is the base of the Ayurveda method of thinking and understanding. All the seers have unanimously approved this theory. Even the research activity in Ayurveda cannot be imagined sans the knowledge of the cause-effect. The research when explained in the terms of Ayurveda is nothing more than the search for the relationship
between the cause and effect. The effect is manifested in the form of new diseases that poses the challenge to the sufferings expecting a sincere investigation into the causes of problem. The eradication of the etiological factor is the first line of treatment in Ayurveda. The whole of Ayurveda aims at the establishment of the normalcy of the tissues. Thus, this effect of normalcy is attributed to the six causative factors termed as Shad kaarana in Ayurveda. The physiology of Ayurveda proposes the transformation of food into seven tissues again confirming to the theory of the cause and effect. The self sufficiency and goodness of the cause leads to the similar effect while the incomplete and deplete cause produce the undesired result. Thus, it can be inferred that cause and effect relationship forms an inevitable concept in Ayurveda solving the mystery of the ever increasing means of diseases through the contribution to research.

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