



PSYCHOSOMATIC DISORDERS W.S.R.T ATATTVABHINIVESA: AN AYURVEDIC APPROACH

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Abstract

Atattvabhinivesa described as *Mahagada* in Charaka Samhita is characterized by a confused state of the mind and false interpretation of the truth. The patient is unable to differentiate the real and the unreal. In modern Parlance Psychosis which is characterised by loss of contact with reality and relationship with other people develops hallucinations and delusions can be interpreted as *Atattvabhinivesa*. In this study, *Atattvabhinivesa* is reviewed from authoritative Ayurvedic literature with rational approach to elucidate the attributes in relation with the etiology, pathogenesis and treatment principles.

Keywords: *Atattvabhinivesa*, *Mahagada*, Psychosis, Ayurveda

Introduction

Atattvabhinivesa denotes that the person has completely gone 'mad', 'maniac' or in fact is attached to unreality. The impaired thinking, impaired will and impaired feeling are observed and the actions executed may not be voluntary but without discrimination between reality or unreality, good or bad and timely or untimely¹. Psychosomatic diseases are on the surge and epidemiological studies report prevalence rate of Psychiatric disorders vary from 9.5 to 370 per 1000 population in India². Ayurveda has mentioned various mental disorders along with its treatment and hence there is a need to stress on the mental diseases explained in Ayurvedic classics such as *Atattvabhinivesa* which can be correlated with various psychosomatic disorders. Such study will enhance better understanding of the diseases and its treatment in a holistic approach through the principles of Ayurveda. The word *Atattvabhinivesa* comprises of two words, the *Atattva*- which is non-object or element or absence whereas, the *Abhinivesa* - is analysis and interpretation. In short, it is termed as delusional disorder and paranoid ideas or thoughts. *Atattvabhinivesa* is the confused state of mind where the patient is unable to differentiate the truth and the false. It is one type of *manas vikara* (mental disorder) in which patients have little sense and confused with interpretation of the objects. Patients are not able to decide the difference between eternal and non-eternal things besides having good physical condition. In this article, *Atattvabhinivesa* with special reference to commonly prevalent psychosomatic disorders will

be reviewed from Ayurvedic classics and modern literature to find out the probable causes, disease pathogenesis, preventive measures and treatment by doing *Yuktivyaprasaya (Sodhana and Samana)* and *Sattvavajaya chikitsa*.

Literature Review

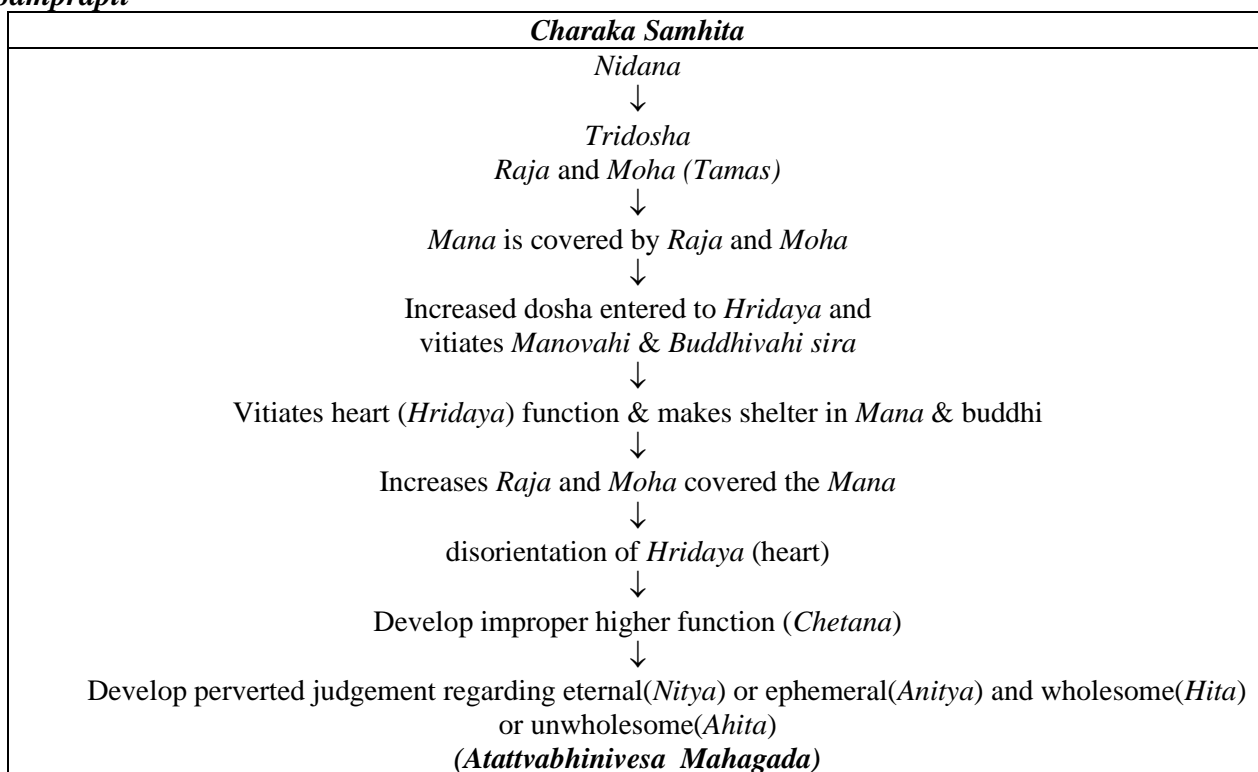
Atattvabhinivesa- This disease is considered as serious disease (*Maha gada*).³

Nidana:

1. Habitual intake of impure food (*Malina ahara*).
2. Suppression of existing natural urges (*Vegan prapta nigrabat*).
3. Excessive indulging of cold(*Sita*), hot (*Ushna*), unctuous(*Snigdha*), dry(*Ruksha*) food.⁴
4. *Pragyaparadh* is prime causes of exogenous diseases. It is the cause of all mental disorders vis diseases related to jealousy (*Irsha*), sorrow(*Soka*), fear(*Bhaya*), anger(*Krodh*), malise(*Dwesh*).⁵

[*Pragyaparadh*- A person whose intellect, patience and memory are impaired, who subjected himself toward bad action.]⁶

Samprapti⁷



Samprapti Ghatak

- *Dosha – Vata, Pitta, Kapha and Raja, Tama.*
- *Dusya- Hridaya, Mana, Majja dhatu.*
- *Srota- Manovahi, Buddhi vahi sira, Majja vaha srota.*
- *Adhithana - Mana, Sareera.*
- *Roga marga- Madhyam.*

Chikitsa Sutra

- *Snehana.*
- *Swedana.*
- *Vamana, Virecana, etc.*
- *Samsarjana karma with Peya and Vilepi.*
- *Medhya annapana* which are promoters of intellect should be given.⁸

- *Pancha gavya ghrta* with *Brahmi swarasa*.
- *Sankhapuspi* and other *Medhya Rasayana*.⁹
- Psychological counseling (*Sattvavajaya Chikitsa*): To employ intimate friends of the patient as tools to motivate and engage him in personal duties and profession. To instill into him understanding, patience, memory, and the power of concentration.¹⁰
- Five Formulations as mentioned in *Charaka Samhita*:¹¹
 1. Garlic paste with oil.
 2. *Satavari* with milk.
 3. *Brahmi* juice with honey.
 4. *Kustha* juice or decoction with milk.
 5. *Vaca* powder with honey.

Discussion

In general, mental disorders caused due to stress or faulty lifestyle which results into depression disorders are characterized by sadness, loss of interest or pleasure, feeling of guilt or low self-worth, disturbed sleep or appetite, feeling tiredness and poor concentration. As there is false interpretation over the truth in *Atattvabhinivesa*, and considered it as *Mahagada*, several major mental diseases which has been associated with symptoms of Psychosis can be interpreted with *Atattvabhinivesa*. Psychosis is seen in many mental disorders, and is considered as a severe form of such disease which needs treatment for longer duration. Psychosis is characterised by loss of contact with reality and relationship with other people causing social maladaptation. Psychosis affects personality, the contact with reality is completely lost, hallucinations and delusions are present and higher risk of self-harm.¹² The modern interpretation of *Atattvabhinivesa* is Psychosis is characterised by loss of contact with reality and relationship with other people causing social maladaptation. Psychosis affects personality, the contact with reality is completely lost, hallucinations and delusions. Hallucination is a perception experienced in the absence of external stimulus. The hallucination can be auditory, visual, olfactory, gustatory, or of tactile domains.¹³

Atattvabhinivesa explained by *Punarvasu Atreya* as *Mahagada*, cannot be interpreted with any single modern mental disorder, rather it can be interpreted with the features of Psychosis which are observed in many mental disorders on the basis of aetiology, patho-physiology, symptoms, management, and prognosis. Some of the different types of psychosis include Schizophrenia, Schizoaffective Disorders, Delusional Disorder, Substance Induced Psychosis, Dementia and Delirium, Bipolar Disorder, Major Depressive Disorder, Postpartum Psychosis, Psychosis due to general medical condition. All the above types of delusions are of non – bizarre type, where the person is completely normal outside the delusion. The person can lead near to a normal life without arousing suspicion regarding their delusional disorder. Substance Induced Psychosis includes Alcohol dependence, Cannabis dependence, or withdrawal of any substance, the patient develops delusions or hallucinations. For example, Cannabis Psychosis (Hemp insanity), Delirium tremens in Alcohol withdrawal. Patient develops visual hallucination and illusions, which are often vivid and frightening, Tactile hallucinations of insects crawling over body are the symptoms observed in Alcoholic Induced Psychosis.¹⁴

In the treatment of *Atattvabhinivesa*, Acharyas have given importance to Purificatory procedures (*Sodhan*) followed by *Medhya Rasayana* (herbs acting on mental health) so that the person attains clarity in the mind and thereby regains memory and orientation. *Medhya Rasayana* such as *Brahmi Swarasa*, *Panchagavya Gritha*, *Shankapuspi*, acts directly on the *Buddhi* which was deranged. Acharyas have also given importance to *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa*. *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* focuses on withdrawal of the bothered mind from unwholesome objects i.e. mainly focusing on the intelligence, consciousness, memory, and spiritual aspects of the affected individuals. *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* aims at stimulating consciousness, altering and discriminating the maladaptive thoughts or actions. Thus, it helps in managing the psychosomatic disorders.¹⁵

Conclusion

By this study of *Atattvabhinivesa* and its correlation with modern literature, it can be concluded that Ayurveda may help to prevent further progression of such diseases through early diagnosis by the help of *Nidana Panchaka* i.e *Nidana* (cause), *Purvarupa* (Premonitory Symptoms), *Rupa* (Symptoms), *Upasaya* (pleasant food, regimen and medication), *Samprapti* (Pathogenesis) and improve the condition through *Yuktivyaprasaya* treatment (*Sodhana* and *Samana*) and *Sattvavajaya* treatment.

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