“Study of Psychological Factors in Etiopathogenesis of Grahani with special reference to Irritable Bowel Syndrome”

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Abstract

Grahani Roga described in classical text books of Ayurveda represents a group of disorders of digestive system caused by impairment of Agni. Grahani is such a disorder, where in its significance is emphasized by its inclusion among Ashta Maha Gadas.

The cardinal features of Grahani explained in the classical text books of Ayurveda, have at most similarities with the clinical features of Irritable Bowel Syndrome (IBS) explained in Modern medicine. In the Ayurvedic classics, which is the one of the main disorder of the gastrointestinal tract. Mind and Body are related to each other. Since one is Adhara and the other is Adheya, one can influence the other. Thus it is clear that somatic disorders have a Psychological backup. So to remove a disease from its root, the causative psychological factors should also be understood and ruled out completely.

Psychological Factors are the tools to understand the state of Manas. According to Charaka Samhita Vimanasthana assessment of Manasika Bhavas or Psycological Factors like Chinta, Krodha, Kama, Shoka and Bhaya can be done by Anumana Pramana. Ayurvedic texts clearly state the Manasika hetus of Grahani Roga in general. Since separate
Nidana Panchakas are not mentioned individually for Grahani Roga. Samanya Nidana is applicable for Grahani Roga also. Influence of Psychological factors in the Chikitsa is also mentioned. Since Grahani Roga is a Pitta Vata predominant disease, the Psychological Factors which can easily be disturbed by Vata and Pitta Dosha also have significant role in it.

The study shows the understanding of Psychological Factors in detail and etiopathogenesis of Psychological Factors in the manifestation and prevention of recurrence of Grahani roga.

Keywords - Grahani, Psychological Factors, Irritable Bowel Syndrome.

Introduction -

In Ayurveda, Ayu (life) is defined as conjunction of body, soul, mind and senses. Each has been given due importance in the maintenance of health and in prevention and cure of disease. A balanced diet and regular exercise are the keys to good digestive health. But in current era, faulty dietary habits, sedentary lifestyle and stress are main causative factors for diseases. People eat a lot of junk and highly processed food with preservatives which contributes significantly to mal digestion and irritable bowel. All these disturb in the function of digestion and absorption, leads to many digestive disorders. These disorders related to digestion and its absorption is broadly covered under the heading of ‘Grahani Dosha’ mentioned in the Ayurvedic classics, which is the one of the main disorder of the gastrointestinal tract. Ayurveda is a medical science to analyse, understand and cure diseases mainly under two headings: Shaaririka and Manasika vyadhis.¹

Grahani Roga (IBS) is one such digestive functional disorder. It is estimated that IBS affects up to 15% of the world population with its symptoms of chronic abdominal pain and major disturbance of bowel functioning.² There is need only to understand the condition according to the fundamental principles of Ayurveda and manage cases accordingly. According to Ayurveda, IBS can be considered as a disorder with a derangement of Vata in Pakvashaya especially of Apana vayu leading to symptoms of pain in abdomen and altered bowel habits. Almost all the diseases are mainly caused by the derangement of Agni. Mandagni leads to Dosha Prakopa. The emotions like Krodha, Bhaya and Shoka etc. have their own effects on the Agni. Dusti of Mana or Agni leads to indigestion, Shoka, Bhaya etc. cause Vayu prakopa. In the
Pathophysiology of Irritable Bowel Syndrome, it’s observed that along with *Apana Vayu*, the other *Dosha* like *Prana vayu, Samana vayu, Pachaka pitta* and *Kledaka kapha* also play important role in manifestation. Both Ayurveda and modern science accept the facts that for better management and prevention of *Grahani Roga* (IBS, Psychological factors are having an inevitable role. Psychological Factors play an important role in the manifestation of *Grahani Roga*. Impaired Psychological Factors are not only limited up to *Grahani Roga* but can lead to any disease and create long term serious effects. Even though all Psychological Factors or *Manasika Bhavas* have their own role in every disease, among them some have found to have profound role in *Grahani Roga* as per Ayurveda classics\(^3\). They are *Chinta, Kama, Krodha, Shoka* and *Bhaya*. Hence the concept of Psychological Factors or *Manasika Bhavas* was taken for the present study to understand it more precisely, and to analyse its role in the manifestation and prevention of recurrence of *Grahani Roga*.

At the level of psyche, the *Rajas*, and *Tamas* are considered to be *Doshas*. In view of their susceptibility to vitiation leading to the imbalances, stresses and conflicts of various kinds which may manifest in the form of desire and lust (*Kama*), anger (*Krodha*), greed (*Lobha*), delusion and confusion (*Moha*), fear (*Bhaya*), and exhilaration (*Harsha*).

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<tr>
<th>Originator of <em>Manasik Bhavas</em> or Psychological Factors</th>
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<td><strong>Rajas Manas Bhava</strong></td>
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<td><em>Manasik Bhavas</em></td>
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PSYCHOLOGICAL FACTORS
(Manasik Bhava):
It can be divided in positive & negative emotions. (Ch. Vi. 4/8)

POSITIVE- Harsha, Priti, Dhairy, Dhriti, Medha, Virya, Shraddha.

NEGATIVE- Bhaya, Shoka, Krodha, Chinta, Raga, Dvesha, Moha.

In Ayurveda the etiology and symptomatology of many diseases highlight the importance of Psychological Factors or Manasik Bhava. When they are in physiological limit described as Manasik Bhava but when it crosses the physiological range, they are termed as Manasik Vikara, in Ayurvedic literature. These psychic factors are involved in almost all the disease process along with physical disturbances as both of these are inter dependent.

About three thousand years ago, Acharya Charaka described very clearly that, “Even salutary food taken in an appropriate quantity (according to individuals Agni) does not get digested, if the person is in a state of Chinta (anxiety), Shoka (grief), Bhaya (fear), Krodha (anger).

Acharya Sushruta also described that “The food is also not properly digested if taken by a person who is emotionally upset due to jealousy, fear, anger, or greed, or who is distressed due to suffering from other diseases or who has taken food not to his liking.

It will be seen from the foregoing that such emotional tensions of stresses as anger, anxiety, worry, fear etc. Not withstanding the above it has been recognized that cortical activity due to psychic causes viz., anxiety, worry, excitement etc. may prevent sleep. Ayurveda has given the prime importance to Manas Bhava for the occurrence of diseases. Diseases are divided in two types i.e. Sharrika (Somatic) and Manasika (Psychological).

If a person is suffering from any Sharrika diseases further it could be converted into Manasik diseases after some duration and same Sampraptti (pathogenesis) is for conversion of Manas or Psychological diseases in to Sharrika disorder. If we discuss another point of view the Psychological Factors or Manasik Bhava play a vital part for the generation of this disease.

As well as Tridosha, Triguna (Satva, Raja & Tama) are constituent part of Psychological Factors or Manas-Bhava behaviour of a person commanded by Manas depends upon Satva, Tama, and Raja Guna, when Raja and Tama are dominant in a person it generate different
negative emotions which causes many mental and physical disorders.\(^7\)

Charaka has mentioned so many instances here it has been shown that somatic disorders also affect the psychic conditions of a human being. For example-

Shoka Bhaya etc. cause Vataprakopa
(Ch. Chi. 19 / 12)

- Vayu is the cause of enlivenment (Utsaha) and excitement (Harsha). When Vayu becomes abnormal in the body it dejects the mind (Ch. Su.12/8).

- Marichi says that abnormal Pitta gives rise to fear, anger, excitement, hallucination (Moha), exhilaration and lucidity (Ch. Su. 12/11).

- The normal Kapha generates the enlivenments (Utsaha) and Slotha (Alasya) and abnormal Kapha causes excessive Slotha and hallucination (Ch. Su. 12/12).

- Similarly, it is seen that excess of grief and anxiety affect the Vata, the anger affects the Pitta, and the much joy affects the Kapha (Ch. Ni. 1/19-22-25)

- Mana – Agni both are Sattva Pradhana

Nidana - There is no direct reference of Manasika nidana in Grahani Adhyaya. But in Vimanshan Adhyaya 2 improper digestions occur due to increase the emotional factors e.g.

Kama Krodha Lobha Irshya hri Shoka ...
Uptapt Manasa (Ch. Vi. 2/8-9)

Uuptapta Manas leads to Agnidusti (Mandagni or Vishamagni or Tikshnagni- collectively it is called Grahani Dosha) and which leads to altered bowel habits with abdominal pain.

Symptoms –

Most of the symptoms go against to that of IBS e.g.

Jirne jeeryate... (Ch.Chi. 15/57-61)

- Bloating increases on empty stomach and relived by taking food
- Cough and dyspnoea (Kasa, Swasa)
- Emaciation (Karshya)
- Oedema (Shun-Padakara) etc.

According to Madhav Nidana symptoms of SANGRAHA GRAHANI are much similar to IBS.

Sangraha Grahani- (M.N. 4 /1-3)

- Antrakujanam
- Drava, Ghana, Snigdha, picchila,
- Sashabda, Mandavedanam
- Pakshan-Masad-Dashad-va-Nityam
- Divaprakopa-Ratroshanti
- Durvijneya, Dushchikitsaya,
- Chirakal Anubandhini

\(^7\)Shoka Bhaya etc. cause Vataprakopa (Ch. Chi. 19 / 12)
Thus there is quite a good similarity between the symptoms of *Sangraha Grahani* and IBS. The basic difference lies in the etiopathogenesis and seat of the disease.

**Role of Psychological Factors in Sampraptti (pathogenesis) of Grahani-**

*Manas hetu* (psychological factors) causes the vitiation of *Dosha* and *Agni* which results in *Agnimandya* (loss of digestive fire) and *Avipaka* (indigested) and in this stage even light diet cannot be digested. It remains as it is in *Aamashaya* and produces *Shuktatva* (fermented/acetonus), which leads to formation of *Annavisha*. This *Annavisha* produces *Ajrna* (indigestion). Once *Agnidushti* occurs it results in *Avipaka*, *Ajrna* and this further damage the *Agni*. *Agnidushti* causes *Shuktapaka* of *Ahara*, it further disturbs the *Agni*. Thus, *Amavisha* produced disturbs the *Grahani* and once it happened it further produces the *Amadosha* and vicious cycle starts. Few etiological factors directly provoke *Dosha*.

**Discussion-**

In the current era of fast moving life, due to injudicious and erratic diet nature and pattern which induces stress to the gut, causing *Dushti* of *Samana vata* which plays a major role in the digestion along with *Pachaka pitta*, *Kledaka kapha* which ultimately effects *Sadhaka pitta*.

Disease Irritable Bowel Syndrome is the commonest disease of
the fast, fashionable, & fast food based modern life. There is involvement of Tridosha but with the dominancy of Pitta and Kapha in this disease. The pathogenesis of Grahani can be categorized as mainly Pitta on first place and Kapha on second place and the least involved is Vata. The conditions Pittavrita (Vata) prana are nearer to symptomatology of Grahani. Hence it seems that the Grahani is a disease condition produced due to Pitta-Kaphavrita Vata mainly Prana and Samana.

Almost all the diseases are mainly caused by the derangement of Agni. Mandagni leads to Dosha prakopa. The emotions like Krodha, Bhaya and Shoka etc. have their own effects on the Agni. Dusti of mana or Agni leads to indigestion, Shoka, Bhaya etc. cause Vata prakopa. In the pathophysiology of IBS, it’s observed that along with Apana vata, the other dosha likePrana vata, Samana vata, Pachaka pitta and Kledaka kapha also play important role in manifestation. Both Ayurveda and modern science accept the fact that for better management and prevention of Grahani Roga (IBS, psychological factors are having an inevitable role. Psychological Factors play an important role in the manifestation of Grahani roga. Impaired Psychological Factors is not only limited up to Grahani Roga but can lead to any disease and create long term serious effects. Even though all Psychological Factors have their own role in every disease, among them some have found to have profound role in Grahani Roga as per Ayurveda classics. They are Chinta, Kama, Krodha, Shoka and Bhaya. Hence the concept of Psychological Factors was taken for the present study to understand it more precisely, and to analyse its role in the manifestation and prevention of recurrence of Grahani Roga. Thus it makes clear that Psychological Factores mentioned above conceived in any form impairs the process of digestion and Grahani occurs.

**Conclusion-** Hence, it can be concluded that Psychology also plays a great role in maintaining the health of a person. An abnormal psychology of a person in terms of anxiety, anger, greediness etc. would affect the physiology of the digestion. These factors tend to affect the secretion of the gastric juice and by that; they are disturbing the homeostasis, which interns Grahani.

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