

LITERARY REVIEWS

An Insight into Anthropology from Ayurveda perspective

*Dr. Monika Kumari, **Dr. Asit K. Panja, ***Dr. K. L. Meena, **** Dr. Prabhakar Vardhan

*Research Officer, MSRARIED Jaipur under CCRAS, **Associate Professor, ***HOD,

****Assistant Professor, P.G. Department of Shalakyta Tantra, National Institute of Ayurveda, Jaipur

ABSTRACT

Objective.: To appraise the contribution of Ayurveda science in anthropology. **Data Source:** The data source is of secondary type which includes Ayurveda classical texts, modern literature viz. as journals and websites related to anthropology. **Review Methods;** The review method adopted was critical review in which classical and contemporary literature pertaining to anthropology was extensively researched and critically evaluated. **Conceptual contribution of Ayurveda science in the field of anthropology has been symbolized. Result, and Conclusion;** In Ayurveda every emphasis is laid to give a detailed account of possible angles of human life right from the evolution, existence and up to death. The origin of human being is explained in a philosophical way from avyakta (unmanifest) which is regarded as the eventual basis of evolution. Three stages namely unmanifest, manifested and unmanifest along with the passion and delusion as the cause of birth and death have been explored scientifically. Physical characters and certain psychological characters have been explained on the basis of dosha prakriti. Evolutionary developments of human physical characters have been explained from five proto-elements. The human behaviour is determined by the variations in psychological states (satva) viz. as shuddha (pure), rajasa (passionate) and tamas (ignorant). Means and importance of social and cultural maturity have been dealt in an excellent way. Few examples in texts enlighten acharyas well acquaintance to genetics also. Adaptability to beneficial dietary measures and life style is encouraged. A detailed description of three types of desha (regions) such as jangal (dry), anupa (tropical) and sadharana (normal) and their contamination, detrimental weather changes along with their management by rejuvenator and purification therapies has been given. Thus Ayurveda preserves its own approach in anthropology.

**Address for Correspondence:****Dr. Monika Kumari**

Research Officer

MSRARIED Jaipur, under CCRAS

Email ID : drmonika1981@gmail.com**Contact No :** 7597117008**Keywords :** Anthropology, Ayurveda, evolution, satva, desha

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Introduction:

Human anthropology is the scientific study of the origin, the behavior, and the physical, social, and cultural development of human. The science of Ayurveda has been documented as the outcome of series of experiments through a long course in a naturalistic way. Analysis of

each field of science in the purview of scientific exploration and incorporation within an oceanic compendium signifies the categorical in sightedness. In Ayurveda every emphasis is laid to give a detailed account of possible angles of human life right from the evolution, existence and up to death. Anthropological considerations were also not untouched. Anthropology is a unique science that has its origins in the natural sciences, the humanities and the social sciences. The study of the human behavior and the physical, social and cultural development of humans were being carried out to enhance the practical acquaintances.

Though the definite term is not mentioned in Charaka Samhita but every aspects of anthropology demarking the domain of anatomy have been dealt with ultimate authentication. Complete physical and social health has been pointed out as the supreme goal of human life. On account of that the studies of social science disciplines have been properly assimilated within this science. In depth examination of context, place, cross cultural comparison, experimental immersion, participant observation etc. of anthropological aspects are analyzed and documented significantly. In that time anthropological thinking was deeply associated with other social sciences. Gradually jurisprudence, history and sociology evolved along with social science of which anthropology was a branch. The logical and analytical glimpses of physical and cultural development of human in different periods of time have been documented in scientific way. The origin of human and mechanism of biological evolution have categorically been made. Detailed descriptions of anthropological characters have been described in successive segments.

Aims and Objectives: To comprehensively appraise the contribution of Ayurveda science in anthropology.

Materials and Methods: Exhaustive study of Ayurveda classical texts was done to scrutinize the significant anthropological issues.

Literary Review:

Origin of Human:

The origin of human being is explained in a philosophical

way in Ayurveda. Acharya Charaka regards avyakta (unmanifest) as the ultimate cause of evolution. He considers it the soul. According to acharya charaka unmanifest led to development of buddhi (intellect) which progressed to (ahamkar) egoism. From egoism five minute proto-elements and eleven senses developed .The unmanifest, intellect and egoism represent the psychological aspect while five protoelements and eleven senses constitute physical side and together they constitute the whole living entity. At the time of death the soul gets separated from the rest of parts and again becomes unmaniest . Ayurveda considers the continuous engagement of oneself in delusion and passion as the cause of birth and death .

The Mechanism of Biological Evolution:

The mechanism of biological evolution has been considered. The entire process from unmanifested self to the man adorning with all faculties are vividly described. Three stages namely unmanifest, manifested and unmanifest along with the passion and delusion as the cause are explored scientifically . The parametric consideration of creation and dissolution process has been made .

Physical Development of Human:

Chronological physical development of the human being from the very beginning state of jelly-like unshaped mass up to the development of mature fetus considering every possible scientific angle has been documented . Prenatal, postnatal, perinatal, infants, toddler and adolescence stages are also analyzed.

Character of Human Being:

Physical character including liking, disliking, dealings, built, initiation of work, lusture, complexion, bodily character like muscle, hairs, body strength, pain threshold have been mentioned under the heading of dosa prakriti. On the contrary study on subtle and exceptional psychosomatic aspects have been carried out and documented in sara purusa. A detailed characteristic of mental faculties in the form of pure, passionate and ignorant group and their seven, six and three subtypes respectively are analyzed accordingly in the purview of

characteristic behaviors and instinct .

Evolutionary Development of Human Physical Character:
As human body is made up of five proto-elements hence development of firm solid heavy rough structures such as nails bones teeth flesh hair tendon etc are predominantly formed from earth element. Fluid mobile soft viscid mucilaginous structures e.g. blood bile urine etc are made up of predominantly water heat radiating luster and color are attributed to agni or fire element. The inhalation exhalation movements of body sense of touch are due to air proto-element. The porosity in body gross and minute channels in the body is preferable to ether proto-element

Behavior of Human Beings:

Behavior is the internally coordinated response (actions or inactions) of living organisms (individuals or groups) to internal and/or external stimuli. Human behavior is supposed to be influenced by the endocrine system and the nervous system. It is most commonly believed that intricacy in the behavior of an organism is correlated to the involvedness of its nervous system . In Ayurveda also human behavior is determined by the variations in psychological states (satva) and is divisible primarily into three types viz. as shuddha (pure), rajasa (passionate) and tamasa (ignorant). Acharya's minute observations led to further classification of these demeanors e.g. seven varieties of satvika behavior, six types of rajas and three types of tamas behavior. They have further indicated towards innumerable variations due to a large number of differences in human behavior. The uniqueness of these behaviors has been illustrated very precisely. People of satvika conduct are honest, energetic, endowed with wisdom, brilliance and intelligence, free from anger, greed, confusion, envy . Rajasika types of persons are covetous, pitiless, cruel, envious, disinclined to work, fickle minded, intolerant, non acquisitive and are devoted to food and recreational pleasures . Tamasika people are fearful, stupid, dull, lazy and exclusively devoted to eating . Thus satvika type of people have standard psychology therefore are devoid of mental illnesses while the rest are pathological psychological states and thus are prone to develop mental illnesses. Hence the basic aim

of this classification was to identify the people at risk of developing mental illnesses and their management. As Ayurveda is also a spiritual science therefore the conduct by which salvation is achieved is also mentioned very sufficiently .

Human adaptability:

Adaptability (Latin: adaptō "fit to, adjust") is a developmental attribute of an organism. In ecology, adaptability has been described as the skill to cope with unanticipated disturbances in the environment. In Ayurveda adaptability means the adoption of those dietary measures and life style which are beneficial to the health of an individual . It includes those measures also which have been made acclimatized to body by continuous use and should be started in prenatal period i.e. by the expecting mother so as have a baby with optimum physical and psychological health . Its three types viz. strong, medium and less according to usage of different types of tastes of food has been described and strong adaptability to intake of beneficial substances e. g. ghee, milk, oil, meat soup and food items encompassing all the types of tastes have been encouraged . Such persons attain great strength. Ideal dietary adaptation also includes the consideration of the natural qualities of food, quantity of food, method of preparation, combination of the foods, timings of food and mental calmness during taking meals etc. . Acharya have also given a detailed description of dietetics and modes of living in different seasons . Moreover homologation to unwholesome diets have been strictly discouraged and if it occurs then a scientific technique of its gradual withdrawal and on its place intake of wholesome food is suggested by learned ancient sages.

Human variability:

Human variability, or human variation, is the assortment of possible values for any measurable trait, physical or mental, of human beings. Differences can be minor or important, transient or permanent, voluntary or involuntary, congenital or acquired, genetic or environmental . Furthermore, the social value put on these differences by the society in which one lives affects

every aspect of a person's life. In Ayurveda sources of variabilities among human beings include shukra shonita prakriti (biological inheritance, shaped by mutations, allelic differences, genetic drift, natural selection), maturaharaviharaprakriti (prenatal environment, nutrition and quality of life of expecting mother) and mahabhutavikaraprakriti (nature of the combination of proto-elements).

Genetic Inheritance:

Inheritance is the passing of traits to offspring from its parents or ancestor. This is the process by which an offspring cell or organism acquires or becomes liable to the uniqueness of its parent cell or organism. The study of heredity is called genetics. In modern science of genetics, understanding of this process, began with the work of Gregor Mendel in the mid-19th century. Inheritance in organisms occurs by passing distinct heritable units, called genes, from parents to progeny . In Ayurveda science there are certain examples which signify Acharya's acknowledgement to genetics e.g. their terms beeja (chromosomes), beejabhaga (genes) and beejabhagavayava (alleles) given in context to congenital defects . Clear mentioning of development of certain organ and fetus such as skin, muscles, pancreas, spleen, bladder from maternal beeja (chromosome) and development of bone, veins, ligaments, arteries from paternal chromosome . There are descriptions of certain measures to change the sex of baby if applied in very early pregnancy or before conception indicating their attempt to work on genetic level. In addition they have also mentioned the aberrations in maternal and paternal beeja (chromosomes) and abnormal maternal diet and lifestyle results in congenital defects . In the same perspective prameha (diabetes mellitus) is regarded as a familial disease .

Environment of human beings:

Environment comprises of the physical and biological factors along with their chemical interactions that affect an organism. The natural environment includes all living and non-living things occurring naturally on Earth. Climate, weather, and natural resources that affect

human survival and economic activity are also included in environment . Ayurveda defines the environment as surroundings in which human beings live. As Ayurveda is a spiritual science as well and salvation is considered the ultimate aim therefore in this direction ancient sages consider a living organism similar to his environment e.g. soil of external environment is represented by solid parts of body, water by fluid content in body and air as life force, tamah (darkness) represented by moha etc. . A vivid description of three types of regions such as jangala (dry), anupa (tropical) and sadharana (normal) have been described. The Acharyas have very nicely portrayed the characteristics of air pollution, water pollution and soil pollution and harmful weather changes . They have also put a light on diseases occurring as a result therapies of contamination and their management by rejuvenation, purification. Ayurveda acclaims performance of unrighteous act as the basic cause of pollution, therefore following a strict discipline of code of conduct has been recommended .

Cultural development of human being:

Culture (Latin: cultura, lit. "cultivation") is a concept based on a term first used in classical ancient times by the Roman orator Cicero: "cultura animi" (cultivation of the soul). In modern Europe in the 17th century the term "culture" referred to the betterment or development of individuals, especially through education. Few scientists such as Edward Tylor used the term "culture" to point the universal human capacity. In the 20th century, "culture" emerged as a fundamental concept in anthropology, encompassing the range of human phenomena that cannot be directly accredited to genetic inheritance . In Ayurveda a lot of literature consisting of several physical and psychological deeds is available for the cultural growth of a human being . A lot of emphasis has been given for cultural growth to lead a supreme healthy life .A person becomes culturally developed when he is nonviolent, is knowledgeable, keeps good control on his senses and is keen in attaining factual knowledge .

Cross cultural comparison:

In Ayurveda gross cultural differences have been

explained from first primal or golden ages onwards. In the primal age (kritayuga/satyuga) humans were endowed with a great vitality, spiritual endeavor, charity, moral discipline etc and were free from fear, desire, greed, anger, pride, disease, fatigue. They were endowed with unlimited longevity. At that time crops were replete with great potency and earth was full with all excellent qualities. With the passage of time in treta yuga (silver age period) people were afflicted with lassitude then indolence and then ultimately with greed. There was deterioration in psychological qualities of human beings and in the beneficial power of the earth. Hence quality of food also deteriorated thus there was a gradual decline in the life span of successive generations and rise in attacks of diseases. Cultural differences regarding unwholesome food habits of people living in different regions were also depicted by ancient sages e.g. constant use of alkali by eastern and Chinese people and excessive use of salt by people of bahlika, sind and saurashtra.

Social development:

A person who is able to establish himself within the domain of social circle and gives significant contribution for the development of society is regarded as socially developed person. In Ayurveda the characteristics of the same have been mentioned e.g. the one who is free from psychological or physical illness, is young and wealthy and who is well acquainted with best physical and mental faculties.

Discussion:

The term “Anthropology” comes from the Greek root “antropos” (man) and “logos” (treaty). This then forms the denomination of this marvelous science under the following terms: Treaty about man. It is man who has been and is the eternal protagonist of the history. Hence we cannot overlook his achievements, his evolution, his conquests in all fields of human knowledge, his incursions into the development of social thought, his adventures derived from amazing discoveries. Undoubtedly, there is nothing more exciting than the study that we make of the humans in all its facets. Ayurveda science is an eternal science and is as old as the humanity is. It was brought to

earth by ancient revered saints for the absolute welfare of humans. Though primarily it is a therapeutic science still this holistic science has incorporated all the important factors essential for social, cultural, intellectual, behavioral development of human beings as the prime thought of Ayurveda is to lead an ideal full span of life.

Conclusion:

Anthropology encompasses the origins, physical and cultural development, biological characteristics, and social customs and beliefs of humankind. In Ayurveda right from the unmanifested self, eightfold nature and their modification have been categorically elucidated in context of origin of human being. Entire theme has been analyzed and presented on the basis of philosophical thought and in the purview of clinical practice. Diverse physical characters have been mentioned in dosha prakrati section. A detailed characteristic of mental faculties in the form of pure, passionate and ignorant group and their subtypes are analyzed according to characteristic behaviors and instincts. Physical anthropology in the form of genetic inheritance, human adaptability and variations, the evolutionary development of human physical characteristics and the differences in appearance among the people of the different parts, as distinct from cultural differences are mentioned scientifically. Means to acquire cultural and social development are acknowledged by citation of several dos and don'ts in classical texts. An ideal cultured and socially developed person is endowed with best physical and psychological traits. Therefore it may be concluded that Ayurveda science assimilates significant domains of anthropology.

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सारांशः

उद्देश्यः मानव विज्ञान (एन्थ्रोपोलोजी) में आयुर्वेद विज्ञान के योगदान का मूल्यांकन करना।
उदास्रोतः उदास्रोतद्वितीयप्रकारकाहै जिसमें आयुर्वेदशास्त्रीयग्रंथ, आधुनिकसाहित्य, एन्थ्रोपोलोजी से संबंधित पत्रिकाएं और वेबसाइट शामिल किये गये हैं।
समीक्षा के तरीकेय अपनाई गई समीक्षा पद्धति आलोचनात्मक समीक्षा थी जिसमें एन्थ्रोपोलोजी से संबंधित शास्त्रीय और समकालीन साहित्य का बड़े पैमाने पर शोध किया गया और गंभीर रूप से मूल्यांकन किया गया। एन्थ्रोपोलोजी के क्षेत्र में आयुर्वेद विज्ञान के वैचारिक योगदान को इंगित किया गया है।
परिणाम, और निष्कर्षय एन्थ्रोपोलोजी ऐसा वैश्विक क्षेत्र है जहां मानवीय विज्ञान, सामाजिक विज्ञान व प्राकृतिक विज्ञान का एक दूसरे से सम्बंधित दृष्टिगोचर होता रहता है। यह विज्ञान मनुष्य की उत्पत्ति, विकास, शारीरिक गुण, मानसिक व्यवहार व मनुष्यों की आपसी विविधता से परिचय करवाता है। आयुर्वेद शास्त्र में मानव जीवन की उत्पत्ति, क्रमिक विकास से लेकर मृत्यु तक के विभिन्न कोणों पर विस्तृत प्रकाश डाला गया है। मानव जीवन की उत्पत्ति व विकास का प्रथम चरण दार्शनिक मतानुसार 'अव्यक्त' परिलक्षित किया गया। जीवन की उत्पत्ति व मृत्यु के मुख्य कारण रज व तम से जीवात्मा का संबंध अत्यन्त ही वैज्ञानिक दृष्टिकोण से प्रस्तुत किया गया है। शारीरिक व मानसिक लक्षण 'त्रिदोष' सिद्धान्त के आधार पर स्पष्ट किये गये हैं। मनुष्य के शारीरिक लक्षणों का क्रमिक विकास पंचमहाभूतों के अनुसार वर्णित किया गया है। मानसिक व्यवहार के लक्षण मुख्य रूप से मन की अवस्थाओं की विविधता के अनुसार वर्णित किये गये हैं, यथा शुद्ध सत्व, रजस सत्व व तामस सत्व। इसके अतिरिक्त मनुष्य की सामाजिक व सांस्कृतिक प्रगति के विभिन्न उपाय आचार्यों ने प्रकरणवश अनेक स्थानों पर इंगित किये हैं।