

## EVOLUTION, REVOLUTION, ACHIEVEMENTS AND CHALLENGES OF AYURVEDA IN 21ST CENTURY: A PERSPECTIVE STUDY

Vaikos C. D\*, Kamble Amol

Dept. Of Sharir Rachna, Govt Ayurved College, Nanded, MS, India

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**\*Corresponding author**

Email: vaikosc@gmail.com

**ABSTRACT**  
As the word Ayurveda is made up of two Sanskrit words Ayuh (life) and Veda (knowledge), it can be defined as an ancient Indian health care system, comprising both practice and theory, and devoted to a systematized quest for a long, healthy, vigorous and happy life<sup>2</sup>. It comprises two distinct traditions: botanical and the metallurgical ("rasa"). The botanical is the older during the period of carak, sushrut and vagbhat. The metallurgical with emphasis on mercury is further studied and made more popular by Nagarjuna. Gradually Ayurveda emerged as a widely respected healing system in India. In 1500 B.C., Ayurveda got bifurcated into eight divisions of medicine. It developed under two main schools: 1) Atreya - The School Of Physicians, 2) Dhanvantari - The School Of Surgeons

**KEYWORDS:** Ayurveda, Atraya, Dhanvantary, TKDL, NKC, NRHM

### INTRODUCTION

It is believed that Ayurveda, Science of Life is neither created nor it is developed by someone but it is told by The God Indra to the The learned Saint scientist Bharadvaj and he taught this science to other learned Saint scientist who were gathered for the conference arranged for the solution of various diseases of mankind near very sacred place of Himalaya. One of the remarkable things about Ayurveda is that it has been conceived and envisioned by sages who were deeply devoted holy people or the learned sage scientist. They considered health as an inherent part of human life for a meaningful sustenance to achieve the goal of Dharm (religious principle), Earth (finance for survival of life), Kam (matter of sex for the creation of healthy generation) and Moksha (to get rid of death-birth cycle). Principles of Ayurveda were envisaged through intensive meditation and divine revelation. These ethics were later recorded into a book that also included other facets of a healthy life and spirituality. It is also believed that the learned sages or saints received their training of Ayurveda through direct cognition during meditation. It means that the knowledge of the use of the various methods of healing, prevention, longevity and surgery came through Divine revelation; there was no guessing or testing or harming of natur particularly animals. Ayurveda has been handed down to us through verbal propagation through ages. Since writing was not developed in ancient times, the wisdom of Ayurveda was taught and assimilated as part of the spiritual tradition of Vedic Religion<sup>a</sup>. later these revelations were transcribed from the oral tradition into book form, interspersed with the other aspects of life and spirituality<sup>1</sup>.

As the word Ayurveda is made up of two Sanskrit words Ayuh (life) and Veda (knowledge), it can be defined as an ancient Indian health care system, comprising both practice and theory, and devoted to a systematized quest for a long, healthy, vigorous and happy life<sup>2</sup>. It comprises two distinct traditions: botanical and the metallurgical ("rasa"). The botanical is the older during the period of carak, sushrut and vagbhat. The metallurgical with emphasis on mercury is further studied and made more popular by Nagarjuna. Gradually Ayurveda emerged as a widely respected healing system in India. In 1500 B.C., Ayurveda got bifurcated into eight divisions of medicine. It developed under two main schools:

#### 1) Atreya - The School Of Physicians

Charak belongs to the Atreya school of medicines (kaychikitsa) that discuss physiology, anatomy, etiology, pathogenesis, symptoms and signs of disease; methodology of diagnosis, treatment and prescription of patients; prevention and longevity. According to the

Charak the root cause of illness is the loss of faith in the Divine that led to suffering and spiritual, mental and physical disease at later stages. External factors that cause diseases include improper dietary habits, lack of proper exercise and wrong lifestyle. There is a whole section dedicated to medicinal aspects of herbs, diet, and reversing of the aging process. Charak has also explained the development of fetus in the womb that exactly parallels to what we know today from using modern technical machinery.

#### 2) Dhanvantari - The School Of Surgeons

Sushrut the other renowned scholar follows the Dhanvantari school of surgeons. In America, there is a society of surgeons who named themselves the Sushrut Society, after this great medical author. In his text Sushrut Samhita he had given detailed and sophisticated explanation of surgical equipment; the classification of abscesses, burns, fractures, wounds, amputation, plastic surgery, anal/rectal surgery, which are validated by modern medicines technical equipment and research. There is a complete discussion of the human anatomy; the bones, joints, nerves, heart, blood vessels, circulatory system etc., again, corroborated by today's methods of mechanical investigation. It is the text that teaches the first science of massage, using marma points or vital body points, which is parallel to Chinese acupuncture.

Both these schools of Ayurveda were authenticated on scientific basis. Both these schools helps Ayurveda to become more scientifically provable and classifiable medical system. As a result Ayurveda grew into a respected and widely used system of healing in India.

The work of Charak and Sushrut found its place in 'Ashtanga Hridaya'. These scriptures contain authentic and comprehensive knowledge of Ayurveda.

In olden days Ayurveda was used in combination with Vedic astrology but later it was organized into its own compact system of health and considered an auxiliary branch of the Vedas, called an Upaveda (limb of the Veda). The authors took the passages related to Ayurveda from the various Vedas and made separate books, dealing only with Ayurveda<sup>2</sup>. Like any other modern medicinal therapies, Ayurveda believes in specialized treatment for different body parts. Thus, the medicinal art have been categorized under branches that deal with psychiatry, internal medicine, treatment of eyes, ears, nose, throat and head, toxicology and gerontology separately. Ayurveda is the first ever medicine system to categorize pediatrics, aphrodisiacs and surgery

as the branches of any medicinal science since 1500 b.c.

#### List Of The Eight Branches

- Kayachikitsa -Internal Medicine
- Shalya chikitsa -Surgery
- Bala chikitsa- Pediatric
- Graha chikitsa- Bhoot Vidya - Psychiatry
- Urdhvanga chikitsa-Treatment of eyes, ears, nose, throat and head
- Damstra chikitsa- Agad Tantra -Toxicology
- Jara chikitsa- Rasayana- Gerontology
- Vrishya chikitsa- vajikarana- Aphrodisiacs

People from different countries started to visit Indian Ayurvedic schools to learn about this world medicine- in its completeness and to attain the wisdom of Ayurveda.. Chinese, Tibetans, Greeks, Romans, Egyptians, Afghanistan's, Persians, and many more traveled to learn the wisdom and bring it back to their own countries. Texts of Ayurveda were translated in numerous foreign languages that resulted in its popularity world over.

Ayurveda is a complete or holistic system that integrates the mind, body and spirit. For a few centuries, the tradition of Ayurveda was dimmed due to the natural and human calamities and also by the invasion of foreign cultures into India. The sacred texts were either destroyed or stolen. Though Ayurveda originated and grown in India, today it is not the main healing practice in India. The reason behind this declination of Ayurveda is foreign invasions that marked there significant influences on every aspect of life including medical system. Firstly The Muslims closed down Ayurvedic colleges and insisted the Indian people practice only their forms of living and finally the British closed down the remaining Ayurvedic universities. But Ayurveda did not disappear altogether, it was practiced secretly until 1920 when it re emerged, and began to rebuild the universities with the help of the Indian government. However there were many 'Vaidyas' or doctors in India who managed to preserve some of the knowledge available in these Holy Scriptures. Divine plants that sustain long life and good health are now being rediscovered. Many renowned families of Vaidyas, who are specialized in certain branches of Ayurveda, have started functioning again in India. Today there is a revival of the ancient culture and traditions inherent to Ayurveda, which is a true gift of the ancient civilization to the modern world.

#### DISCUSSION

Today Ayurveda has gained a immense popularity not only in India but all over the world. In India there are 2 Ayurvedic universities and 254 Ayurvedic colleges that are imparting Ayurvedic knowledge to 11927 students at undergraduate level as per Ayush report<sup>4aa</sup>.

There are numerous Ayurveda clinics and centers all over the world that are providing medicinal as well as other healing services based on ancient knowledge of Ayurveda.

As per the information based on Indian Embassy Various NGOs are working abroad for propagation of Traditional Indian Medicine. The NGOs who are working and practicing Ayurveda to serve the society in various contry are Australia 14, Austria - 04,Belgium-05,Brazil-04, Bulgaria-02,Canada-05,Crotia-2,Cyprus-2, Czech Republic-3, Denmark-1, Finland-2, France-10, Germany-16 etc<sup>3</sup>

Ayurveda is a science that works in a complete harmony with nature. The products used in Ayurvedic treatments are purely natural, extracted from several herbal plants. Thus they are safe and do not cause any adverse effects in general. The other reason responsible for popularity of Ayurveda is its cost effectiveness. Ayurvedic treatments are quite inexpensive than other modern medicinal treatments.

There are number of websites available on internet today that

provides knowledge about Ayurveda and Ayurvedic treatments, therapies, programmes and centers that provide these services.

Ancient Indian wisdom invokes Ayurveda as a complete system of health care that integrates mind, body and spirit. It has been validated by the modern science in the contemporary world. Numerous divine principles and Ayurveda applications are put into practice for sustenance of healthy human life. It can be said with certainty that Ayurveda is a precious gift of an ancient civilization to the modern world. Ayurved needs human resource development, capacity building, resource optimization meet the growing aspirations of students, faculty, practioners, researchers, industries, and most importantly millions of health seeking people<sup>4</sup>.

#### ACHIEVEMENTS

Ayurved has achived its global image in 21<sup>st</sup> century and made - Collaboration with Russia, Memorandum of Understanding signed between Department of AYUSH and

State Administration of Traditional Chinese Medicine, Framework of Cooperation signed between Department of AYUSH and International Trade Center, Geneva, Participation in WIPO's Intergovernmental Committee on Intellectual Property and Genetic Resources, Traditional Knowledge and Folklore, Market authorization of Ayurveda products in Europe, India member of International Regulatory Cooperation on Herbal Medicines (IRCH). Team of Ayurveda experts deputed to Hungary to conduct programs on Ayurved in 2007, Ayurveda Conference at Budapest, Hungary- The Indian Embassy in Hungery has arranged an International Conference-cum-Exhibition on Ayurveda in Budapest on 29<sup>th</sup> September, 2007 to showcase the strengths of Ayurveda and to explore the opportunities of possible collaborations with educational institutions and Universities in the field of education, research etc. On the sidelines of the above Conference, meetings were held with Hungarian State Secretary for Health, Director General of National Institute of Pharmacy, National Health Insurance Fund and University of Debrecen. Indian experts who had the opportunity of visiting Hungary and other European countries a decade ago found a marked resurgence of interest in Ayurveda in Europe this time<sup>5</sup>.

CME courses of Ayurveda in US medical schools -The Department had deputed two experts in 2007 for a period of one month to USA to deliver lectures to medical students under CME modular teaching at the Medical Schools of University of Connecticut and University of Washington. The experts received tremendous response. Similarly an expert was deputed during April-June, 2008 to conduct a CME course in University of Connecticut. The Expert also visited Mayo Clinic at Rochester, Minnesota for talks on future collaborations<sup>6</sup>.

#### Traditional knowledge digital library

This is another big achievement by Govt of India for the conservation, preservation and protection of our rich traditional heritage which involves documentation of the traditional knowledge available in public domain from the existing literature related to Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha in digitized format, in five international languages which are English, French, German, Spanish and Japanese. So far, the TKDL includes about 2.12 lakh medicinal formulations ( Ayurveda: 82,900; Unani: 1,15,300; Siddha: 12,950 ), from 148 books available in public domain, and the database exists in 34 million A4 size pages. Creation of TKDL – Yoga is under process and till date about 900 no. of Yoga postures from 14 old yoga books in public domain have been transcribed, which will also be videographed and added to TKDL database.

Government of India, on 29th June 2006, has approved to provide the access of TKDL database to International Patent Offices, under Non-disclosure Agreement, between CSIR and respective International Patent Office, according to which -(i) Access to TKDL by the examiners of an international patent office would only be utilized for patent search and examination, and (ii) International

Patent Offices and their examiners would not make any third party disclosure other than what is necessary and essential for the purpose of patent search and examination. Access to TKDL has been given to European Patent Office (having 35 member states), German Patent Office, Indian Patent Office and United States Patent and Trademark Office (the Agreement for which was signed in November 2009, on the sidelines of the State visit of Hon'ble Prime Minister to United States)<sup>7</sup>.

#### Activities at international level

Promotion of AYUSH systems at International level is inbuilt in the mandate of Department of AYUSH. Growing global demand of natural medicine has increased the scope of International exchange of AYUSH-related information and co-operation with other countries for collaborative efforts in the development of traditional system of medicine. A provision of Rs 25 Crores has been made in the XI plan (2007-12) for international cooperation.

A Central Sector Scheme for Promotion of International Co-operation (IC) in AYUSH is to be implemented with the following components.

- International exchange of experts & officers.
- Incentive to drug manufacturers, entrepreneurs, AYUSH institutions etc. for international propagation of AYUSH and registration of their products by USFDA/EMEA/UK-MHRA for exports.
- Support for international market development and AYUSH promotion-related activities.
- Promotion of Ayurveda, Homoeopathy, Unani and Yoga abroad through young Post Graduates.
- Translation and publication of AYUSH books in foreign languages.
- Establishment of AYUSH information Cells/Health Centres in Indian Embassies/Missions and in the Cultural Centres set up by ICCR in foreign countries and deputation of experts.
- International Fellowship Programme for foreign nationals for undertaking AYUSH courses in premier institutions in India.

## CHALLENGES

### Recommandetion Of National Knowledge Commission.

it is the duty of every person to get implemented the recommandetion of national knowledge commission. The national knowledge commission has made recommendations of traditional medicine to Govt of india to strengthen,develop the traditional medicine to achieve goal and put 10 year plan before Government.. The GOI should make an allocation of Rs.1,000 crores towards the operationalisation of the mission, over a period of five years<sup>8</sup>

### NRHM and Ayurved

Dept of Ayush and particularly Ayurveda should participate in Natinal Rural Health Misson to bring down the maternal mortality rate which is 3.01/1000 to 1/1000, infant mortality rate from 58/1000 to 28/1000 as suggested by planning commission in 12<sup>th</sup> five year plan<sup>9</sup>.

### Education and research

High quality undergraduate and post graduate education and evidence based research must be carried out to meet the demand of 21<sup>st</sup> century especially in life style related disorder, geriatrics, alternative solution for horrible but necessary curative treatment against certain cancer especially in bladder cancer,colon cancer etc where cystectomy,colonectomy etc is unavoidable.

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