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Review Article

CRITICAL APPRAISAL OF KARANA (CAUSES) IN AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

Health and disease are prime focus in the field of Indian medicine and exploration of cause as primary thrust in human being. Cause and effect in Ayurveda is discussed throughout Ayurvedic texts. A critical appraisal of karana(cause) from different point of view was done and it has been concluded that effect conceived in form of sign/symptoms in healthy or diseased must have certain cause. No individual cause can bring an effect until there is an interrelationship, inter-contact and interaction among causes. Causes in Ayurveda has been explored in different contexts in form of causative factors for disease, dhatusamyata (health), cause for origin of shrishiti (universe), purusha (human), garbha(foetus), karyadravya(existing matter), one cause for many effect, use of different synonyms like hetu, nidana, ayatana, nimitta, role of cause in therapeutics, cause as one important examination tool of dasha parikshya vishaya, cause as primary focus for research etc. were intervened. What is this cause? In which form has cause been described in Ayurveda? What are different names for these causes in Ayurveda? What are the different effects produced by causes? Analysis of karana from different point of view has been objective of this paper..

Keywords: Cause and effect, Hetu, Nidana, Interaction, Karyakarana.

INTRODUCTION

Any science is developed searching for reasons of an objective. That objective in fact is the effective form that is seen. A series of questions comes into any one's mind as to what, Why, how, when has this substance exists? The question of what has been assigned a name (nomenclature) of an object, that this object is such and such is abhidheyatwam, research to its root is exploring and enriching its knowledge and is termed as abhigyeyatwam¹ but why leads to finding for the reasons or cause. Ayurveda is an effective compilation of science, Art and Philosophy with aims of health and eradication of diseases. Origin must have a primordial cause. What is this cause? In which form has cause been described in Ayurveda? What are different names for these causes in Ayurveda? What are the different effects produced by causes? This is the objective of this paper.

Material methods:

1. Collection and compilation of term karana from different Ayurvedic texts, commentaries, and research journals
2. Comparing different views with critical appraisal of karana giving a clear view to this concept and constitute a clinical forum for this concept.

There is no existence of karya (effect) without karana(cause). Cause in Ayurveda has been discussed in different forms. Here are different scopes of causes being elaborated.

As per different available dictionaries Meanings have been explored in different dictionaries of Vachaspatyam, Shabda sagar, shabdakalpadruma and Apte.

1. **According to vachaspatyam:** "kriyanishpadake hetau"² i.e factor that is responsible for bringing an effect (kriya) is karana, specific tools used are also called Karana. it is also called as hetu for that effect, objective.
2. **According to shabda sagar:** karana may be Cause, motive, origin, principle, Action, agency or an organ of sense, instrument or means, An element, elementary matter, A deity, as the remote or proximate cause of creation. "Kriya" to do or act, in the causal form, and "yuch" or "lyut" affix, or "karan", and "ana" added³.
3. **According to shabda kalpa druma,** karana has been etymologized as
"Yena vina yanna bhavati tata"⁴
i.e. a factor without which work cannot be done, giving its synonymns as hetu, bija etc.
4. According to Apte⁵, he gave karana as a cause, that which is invariably antecedent to some product and is not otherwise constituted; or according to Mil,⁶ the antecedents or

concurrence of antecedents on which the effect is invariably and unconditionally consequent, According to Naiyayiks It is of three kinds:

- a) Samvayi (intimate or inherent), as threads in case of cloth
- b) Asamavayi (non-intimate or non-inherent) as the conjunctions of threads in case of cloth.
- c) Nimitta (instrumental) as the weavers loom.

Ayurvedic review: Health is considered as root cause to achieve four objectives of human life together called chaturvidh purushartha i.e. dharma, artha, Kama, moksha.⁶ Chakrapani in his commentary on Charak Samhita states that compendia includes hetu or karana (causes), linga (sign-symptoms/effects) throughout the text.⁷ Various topics have been discussed as a subject content in Ayurveda termed as “tantrarth” which discusses about hetu (etiology) as one among ten important contents which has been described and spread all over the treaties⁸.

Importance of having Knowledge of Karana: The responsible etiological factor for genesis of any disease if properly known, then relevant therapy may be given to cure diseases alleviating dosas. It also gives knowledge about further complications which may be avoided. In state of confusion for any diseases, clarification can be done by properly examining the etiological factor⁹.

In Ayurveda karta is considered karana. Hetu, nimitta, ayatana, karta, pratyaya, samutthan, nidana have been considered as synonym of karana. Various types of classification of Karana have been given in madhav nidana’s commentary of Madhukosh. Causes in context of creation according to Sushruta are six (Ritesh Ashok et al, 2013).¹⁰ In the concept of nidana a synonym of karana, it has been said that nidana are external cause of diseases. Its knowledge is useful in diagnosis, prognosis, and treatment point of view. Management of disease includes avoidance of causative factors (brijesh et al, 2015)¹¹.

Karyakarana vada is one theory that proposes about relationship of karya (effect) and karana(cause) where karana stands for preexisting definite cause which is necessary for production of karya (effect). Karana has been classified into three types as samavayi (intimate cause), asamavayi (non-intimate) and nimitta (instrumental cause). Karya and karana and their relationship have been discussed in purview of satkaryavada and asatkaryavada (Anita P S et al,2013).¹² According to sankhya philosophy, they have considered effect as expressed form of karana itself with difference in shape, size or function or both (Satkar sharvari & Dwibedy BK, 2016)¹³.

Hetu as one of the synonym of karana is the foundation base to subject content of Ayurveda as trisutra which includes hetu, linga, aushadh was the sutra form of knowledge given by Indra to Bharadwaj which was expanded to current Ayurvedic form. Root causes of all diseases are asatmendriyartha samyoga (improper contact of subject to its senses), pragyaparadh (intellectual blasphemy) and parinama (time). It has been concluded that “hetumhetoavartanam” in context of swabhavo paramavada is actually absence of cause which leads to destruction of diseases (Sananoor Manjulatha et al, 2012)¹⁴. In application of Satkaryavada based on theory of karyakaranavada, it has been stated that shrishti (universe),

evolving of human or roga utpatti, there is an involvement of karya-karana siddhant (cause and effect theory). Ayurveda’s main aim of dhatusamyata is achieved by satakarana (six causes) in which three causes i.e. dravya, guna and karma are said to be sata (existent) karana. It has been concluded that chikitsa (treatment) is based on karya-karana (Akansha Anupam et al, 2011)¹⁵. In contexts of dhatusamyata, sadapadartha which are samanya, vishesha, dravya, guna, karma and samavaya are considered as causes. These six sets of cause employs dravya for functioning based on inherent relationship of guna (qualities) inherently present (samavaya) inside a dravya on basis of which it performs karma(actions). These work by mechanisms of samanya or vishesha¹⁶.

Samanya and vishesha as a cause for health maintenance and basis of treatment: Basic principles of samanya and vishesha states that these are causes for augmentation or diminution. It has been said that samanya (generic concomitance/generality/similarity) is cause for augmentation/increase of any factor while vishesha (variant factor) is said to be cause for diminution¹⁷.

Assessing interaction and interrelationship between causes:

No single cause is able to produce karya (effect) but it is actually interrelation and interaction of different causes that causes leads to any effect. These interactions have been tried to be explained taking examples of quadruple of therapeutics, srishti utpattikrama (origin of universe), and definition of samprapti (pathogenesis).

The quadruple of therapeutics as cause: These four aspects of therapeutics are the physician, medicine, attendant and the patient. If these four possess their qualities then these four in combination are cause for effective therapeutics.

Specific contribution of Charak is its examinative methods which comprises of yukti as one of the examination methods. It is the process of yukti which states that intellect perceives different objects as outcomes of combination of multiple causing factors “**bahu karana yogajana**” this is in fact interaction of causes. In explaining the examples of yukti as a

1. Water + ploughed soil + seed + season (causes) give seedling (effect).
2. A combination of causes like sada dhatu gives rise to embryo (effect),
3. Wood + wood driller instrument + driller + drilling activity are the causes for production of fire (effect).

Thus yukti as a source of knowledge is a view to perceive effect through set of causes working together in a combination.¹⁸

In reference of rashi purusha, it is stated that rajas and tamas gets attached to sattva to give its endless tradition of birth. It has to be seen that sattva, rajas and tamas could be considered as primordial cause but actually it is their combination which leads to the endless tradition of purusha.

“rajastomabhyam yuktasya sanyogo ayam anantvavana”¹⁹

For a doer (primary cause) to bring a required result, one needs different tools (secondary cause), but karta or doer remains the same. When this combines with different karana (tools) then he is responsible for all karma (actions). Explaining it chakrapani states that karana is sharira (physical body), indriya(senses), etc and karta is atman. Giving an

example of sculpture as efficient cause of all actions by virtue of possession of instruments, hammer, wood, cutter etc. as a sculpturer needs hammer etc.²⁰.

A way to look Samprapti (pathogenesis) with angle to perceive different causes: In the definition given by Acharya Vagbhata, causes can be explored. Samprapti involves all three causes classified by tarkasamgraha. “Dosha” are the “samavayi karana”, “yatha dusten” are the “nimitta karana” which acharya charaka has already given as asatmendriyarth sanyog, pragyaparadh and parinama while “yatha cha anuvisarpita” shows the interactive process which are asamavayi cause. That is why samprapti is samyak prapti of hetu or karana²¹.

“yatha dushten doshena yatha cha anuvisarpita,
nivrattiramayasasau samprapti”

Ayurvedic is astika science (theist) giving prime importance to Atman as karana dravya. This Atman as cause for

consciousness and is devoid of any pathogenicity, it is the cause for consciousness and manifests its consciousness through psyche, senses and its objects²².

Cause in aggravation of doshas and maintenance of dhatus: Kumar shira Baradwaja in his explanation to the causes of aggravation of vata dosha states that habitual use of substance having identical properties, actions having identical empirical effects are causes for vata aggravation and he concludes that with habitual use of substances with homologous qualities leads to result in enhancement of dhatus²³.

karana dravya are causes of karya dravya:

Panchamahabhuta, atman, manas, kala and disha are collectively called dravyasangraha and these are karana dravyas for manifestation of any karya²⁴.

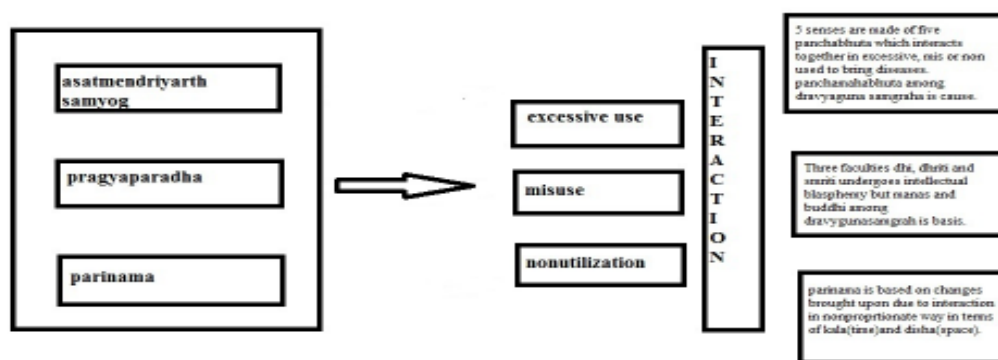


Figure.: Interrelation between trividh nidana and dravya guna sangraha

Cause and swabhavoparamvada: In one of theory swabhavoparamvada, it is said that there is causative factor for manifestation of being but there is no causative factor for annihilation²⁵.

As cause for origin of living being and disease: Punarvasu Atreya’s conclusion for causes of origin of living being and disease was concluded as the factor in wholesome combination are responsible for creation of living being but in stage unwholesome combination they are responsible for diseases²⁶.

Causes for pathology of dosha, dhatu : Homologous nature of etiological cause with dosha and dhatu (samanya) when the etiological factors have homologous properties with doshas and or dhatus, or when dosas have properties homologous with dhatus this leads to manifestation or aggravation of diseases. Etiological factors have always properties homologous to dosas otherwise they will cease to be called as etiological factors because they will lose their identity to cause any disease. If it is in lesser degree then with passage of time due to repeated combination in smaller degrees, they may lose strength and may result in non-manifestation of diseases, while if the etiological factors, dosas and dhatus are

favourably or strongly with with each other, then disease may be manifested or all symptoms may be manifested²⁷.

Disease acting as cause for other disease: one disease may act as a causative factor for other diseases. These are classified as Nidarthakara roga²⁸.

Productivity of causative factors: causes may have many configurations in causing a disease as one causative factor may cause many diseases like jwara (fever), bhrama (giddiness), pralaap (delirium) may be caused by ruksha (unctuous) guna. There might be condition in which one cause may be itself cause of one disease e.g. ruksha (unctuous) may be cause for jwara. Another condition where many causative factors combine to produce one disease for e.g. rukshaadi (unctuous etc.) may cause jwara(fever) and another condition where multiple causes may act together causing many diseases ex intake of ushna(hot), lavana(saline), ruksha(unctuous) may cause jwara, raktapitta, gulma etc.²⁹

General and specific causes: Chakrapani in janapadodhwansiya adhyaya states that causative factors for disease are of two types i.e general causes which are common to living being and secondly specific causes which effects individuals e.g. vitiation of vata dosha by intake of vatala

ahara and vihara. General causes have a common effect over all living being manifested through vitiation of air, water, land, and season³⁰.

Pragyaparadh as root cause of janapadoshwansa: In the concept of human-environment –cosmos doctrine proposed, it is said that root cause for it is adharma (loss of righteous acts or previous sinful deeds). This adharma or sinful acts are caused by pragyaparadha (intellectual blasphemy)³¹.

Importance of karana for physician: Knowledge of karana and karya as essential for physician. Such is the importance of knowledge of karana and karya that it was said that physician can obtain desired result only when he has proper knowledge of set of ten factors consisting of cause and effect as two. In reference of ten topics for examination, the physician serves as the cause for achievement of the object i.e. the maintenance of the equilibrium of dhatus³².

Contact of Manas with indriya as a cause for knowledge: Psyche as a tool and cause for knowledge manas (psyche) is said to be the cause for perceptions of knowledge by its interaction with senses and objects³³.

Cause of sukha and dukha: Individually neither senses, objects are causes for happiness or miseries but unlike it, it is their four fold combination as excessive, non-utilization or wrong utilization and proper utilization which is the cause for miseries or happiness. So this combination itself is a causative factor for happiness and miseries³⁴.

A study based experimental work to establish relationship between karana and karya was done by taking lavana rasa in excessive intake (cause) for effects like raktavridhi (increased blood), palitya (greying of hairs), shotha (swelling), daurbalya (decreases power) with explanation of causing effects from modern scientific view (Mishra Praveen et al, 2015)³⁵. In his article on punarjanma (reincarnation); a bird s eye view has considered daiva as adrishta or invisible causes of nature with its role in determining life span of individual along with predisposition of disease. They also considered that Ayurveda subject content is full of matters with cause in almost every spheres (Haritha Chandran et al, 2014).³⁶ Researches being carried out throughout the world in field of science or other are based on establishment of the relationship of cause and effect (Purohit et al, 2016)³⁷. Doctrine of cause and effect has been emphasized by (Panja et al, 2011)³⁸ where it is considered important in clinical view and effect assessment through cause and vice versa is assessed. Clinical importance of karana was emphasized stating that one karana can be the cause for bringing many karya (effects). This was elaborated via many examples to show that with different anupana, samyoga (combination), samskara, matra (dose) a drug had different results. It is also emphasized that karya (effects) needs karana (cause) with specific relationship and having potency to produce the effect, moreover treatment is based on drug selection on basis that it will show required effect. (Akansha Anupam et al, 2013)³⁹.

DISCUSSION

Inclusion of karana among “Trisutra” as hetu and later in “Tantrartha” holds its prime importance on which elaboration of subject content in Ayurveda is done. Karana as karana

dravya is basis of every karya dravya. The basis of three main causes i.e. asatmendriya artha samyoga (imperfect conjugation with senses), pragyaparadha (intellectual blasphemy) and parinama (time) are based on dravya guna sangraha i.e. panchamahabhuta with asatmendriyarth sanyog, pragyaparadh with manas and atma, parinama with kala and disha. The term is applied in various meanings in Ayurveda and Ayurveda have been started from Karya karana theory. its meaning varies on different references i.e. karana as etiological factor, in ten examination components for investigation of vaidya, In reference of Ayurvedic padartha as subject content sadapadartha as a cause and dhatusamyata as its effect. In reference of chikitsa chatuspada, vaidya is said to be cause of chikitsa, so vaidya is the karana. Different synonymn of karana as hetu, ayatana, nidana etc. are applied in reference of diseases. In reference of Rashipurusha hetu term is applied while for paramatma, karana term has been applied. A single cause can have no effect, so karana (cause) has been described in three ways which are samavayi (chief cause), nimitta (initiating/accessory cause) and third one is very important related to interrelation-intercontact-interaction is asamavayi karana. This theory is important as reference given in Yukti which states that investigation should be based on analysis of different causes. There are situations where for effect the contact of different causes are essential which may be regarded as inter contact of causes. As a specific effect for buddhi, contact of different causes is essential which is compared with example as friction of thumb, guitar, nail comes in contact to produce sound similar is perceptual faculty. Samprapti is also a methodology to analyze the different causes as “yatha dushten (i.e. how dushya gets abnormal ” is nimitta cause, “doshen i.e. tridosha vata, pitta, kapha ” is samavayi cause and “yatha cha anuvisarpita” i.e. how dushya and dosha comes in contact and interact is asamavayi karana. It is fact that these three are causes of effect in any disease but without interrelation, contact and interaction of these causes any disease will not exist. In case of yukti the term “bahukaranayogajana” clarifies a single cause cannot be responsible for existing effect. “Rajastamobhyamyuktasya samyogo ayam anantvana” in reference of shrishti utpatti also shows that the intercontact, interrelation and interaction between manas guna gives rise to purusha. In reference of chikitsa (therapeutics), aushadha (drug) is the main cause but without association of bhisak (physician), rogi (patient), upasthata (attendant) the karya (effect) of dhatusamyata (equilibrium of dhatu) does not exist. Different philosophical concepts based on cause and effect are satkaryavada, karyakaranavada, parinamvada, asatkaryavada which are applied in one or other in Ayurvedic subject content as well as clinically. Avoidance of cause is an important measure among treatment. Proper knowledge of hetu/nidan/karana (cause) is an important measure for prognosis, diagnosis and treatment of disease. Ayurveda practices one treatment type called daivavyapashraya chikitsa as it believes in some invisible causes called daiva based on actions or karma in previous life. Here it is emphasized that neither senses nor psyche nor atma nor subject acts as cause but conjugation of subjects is the cause for sukha or dukha.

CONCLUSION

There is no effect without cause. An effect cannot exist without inter relation; inter contact and interaction of different causes which has been categorized as samavayi, asamavayi and nimitta causes. Samavayi is chief causes, nimitta is initiating and root cause while asamavayi is the interrelation-intercontact and interaction.

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