



Utility of *Samskāra* in preventive, curative and liberation aspect

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Abstract: Ayurveda is the ocean of knowledge; especially diamond of the ocean. *Samskāra* is having a unique role in the fundamental principles of Ayurveda. It is inherently related to almost all branches of Ayurveda just like a fragrance of sandal. Either Dietary food or medicine whatever it may be needs proper *Samskāra* in order to maintain proper health. Hence the knowledge of *Samskāra* is very essential to the physician while combating with diseases using the medicine as per *Gundharmas* (Properties). The role of *Samskāra* in preventive as well as curative measure is very crucial because with the help of *Samskāra* we maintain the equilibrium of *Dosas* in healthy individual. Caraka clearly explained that (*Ca.Su.5/13*) one should take as a daily routine the articles which maintain the health and prevent the unborn diseases¹.

When we think critically it is clear that proper *Samskāras* are needed to our body and Mind. *Caraka* explained in (*Ca.Su.7/53*) sutra forsaking intellectual errors (*Pradnyāpradha*), pacification of sense organs, memory, and sound knowledge of place, time and self and following the code of good conduct this is the way shown for the prevention of exogenous diseases². In this way Acharya *caraka* not only focused the *Samskāras* about body but also about mind.

Key words: *Samskāra*, *Gundharmas* (Property), *Pradnyāpradha* (Intellectual error), exogenous diseases.

Introduction:

In Ayurveda, the word *Samskara* is introduced as “*Samskaraohi Gunaantradhyanam*” संस्कारो ही गुणान्तराधानम् (*Ca.Vi. 1/24*) which means qualitative improvement carried out by incorporating the specific qualities. *Desha*, *Kala*, and self should always keep in mind and all the hygiene properly should be followed then we can easily prevent all physical and mental disorders. Curative therapeutics i.e. *Samshodhana* (Expulsion of excess *dosās* by upward or downward direction) and shaman (Pacification of excess *Dosas* in the body) both are the part of *Samskāra*.

Abnormality (disorder) is disequilibrium of *Dhatus* and their equilibrium is health or normalcy. Health is known as happiness while disorder is unhappiness³. (*Ca.Su.-9/4*) Pacification of vitiated *dosās* it is a *Samskāra*.

One is in the twelvefold formula of dependent origination (*paticca-samuppāda*) in Pali literature, where the *sankhāras* are the second link in the series. They are said to be conditioned by ignorance and to function as a condition for consciousness. Putting together statements from various *suttās*, we can see that the *sankhāras* are the *kammically* active volitions responsible for generating rebirth and thus for sustaining the onward movement of samsara, the round of birth and death. In this context *sankhāra* is virtually synonymous with *kamma*, a word to which it is etymologically akin⁴.

Discussion

It is said that *Samskāra karanam matam* – *Samskāra* is processing (Ca.Su.-26/34) again question arises that what is *karana* ? Kriyate yat karanam Karana means action⁵. While describing *Trayoupastambha* Acharya *caraka* says that *Ahara* (Diet), *Nidra* (Sleep) and *brahmacarya* (Celibacy) are the three *Upstambhas* (Sub-pillars) of the body. If these three are observed properly and thus the body is supported well by these pillars, it continues well-endowed with strength, complexion and development till the completion of lifespan provided one abstains from harmful practice⁶. The *Samskāras* are responsible for that. By the avoiding of the harmful matters with respect to the body *Samskāra* plays crucial role.

The *Parādi Guna* named on the first attribute of the group para are ten in numbers and quoted by *Caraka* as those to be known mandatorily by the physician to ensure the successful treatment. A physician sans the knowledge of these ten attributes cannot practice in a proper way. *Acārya caraka* has emphasized regarding the study and knowledge of *Samskāra* in order to conduct precious therapeutics by the physician. He says that the knowledge of *Paradi guna* is inevitable for the purpose of siddhi in *cikitsā*.

These ten *Guna* are: Table I

Paratva	Apartva	Yukti	Sankhya	Samyoga	Vibhāg	Pvarithakat	Parimana	Samskāra	Abhyasa
Superiority	inferiority	Logic	Figure	Union	Division	Separation	measurment	Modification	Practice

(Ca.Su.26/29/30)

Samskāra is transformation or processing. *Samskāra Karanam matam* Ca.Su.26/34

The *Samskāra* is the transformation or processing. This implies generally increasing the quality thus this is used in a positive sense. It is termed as *Gunāntaradhām* (Imbibing of new qualities) in *Ayurveda* parlance.

Prasastapāda described three types of *Samskāra* viz. *Vega* (Momentum), *Bhavanā* (Memory) and *Sthitisthāpakatva* (Elasticity): **Table II**

<i>Vega</i> (Momentum)	This is the cause of motion in the formed <i>Dravyas</i> like the <i>Panchmābhoota</i> is the <i>vega Samskāra</i> . It prevents the floating substance from falling immediately to the ground.
<i>Bhavanā</i> (Memory)	It is the cause of recalling or identifying the prior experienced subjects.
<i>Sthitisthāpakatva</i> (Elasticity)	The attribute responsible for bringing back the displaced object to the original position is the elasticity.

Samskāra Utility in Ayurveda: Table III

<i>Pārada Samskāra</i>	The transformation of the Mercury. The backbone of Ayurveda <i>Rasshātra</i> Mercury (<i>Pārad</i>) is highly poisonous in the crude state is totally transformed into the ambrosia or panacea by the eighteen special processes termed as <i>Samskāra</i> . After these processes the transformed <i>Pārada</i> is used in medicinal preparation.
The Food processing	The raw material to be used as food is first transformed by various processes like the washing, peeling, and then cooked onto the fire to make it digestible and conducive to the body requirements. The whole of the food processing industry is based on the <i>Samskāra</i> . The <i>Samskāra</i> also removes the impurities if any in the material to be used and optimally utilized for the body.
Pharmacy	The medicinal preparations expect the transformation of the raw material to an utilizable form. The <i>Bhavanā</i> or impregnation of the material with the desired qualities is an excellent example of the Samsara.

Therefore the transformation processes augment the quality of the material and makes it suitable to be used in myriad forms.

Acharya *Caraka* while describing eight specific factors of method of dieting (*Ashtahārvidhivisheshayanani*) has given details of Samskara⁷.

Karanam punha swabhavikanam Dravyanamabhisamskarha....(Ca.Vim.1/2) *Karanam* /processing is the making or refinement of the natural products which means imparting other properties. These properties are infused by contact of water and fire (*Agnisamskāra*), cleansing, churning, place, time, infusing, steeping etc. and also by long duration utensil etc. *Samskāra* can be done through following methods: 1. *Toya Sannikarsha* (water treatment), 2. *Agni Sannikarsha* (fire treatment), 3. *Toya-Agni Sannikarsha* (water & fire Treatment) 4. *Shoucha* (Washing/ Cleaning) 5. *Manthana* (Churning) 6. *Desha* (Place) 7. *Kaala* (Season/Time factor) 8. *Vaasana* (Rendering Fragrance) 9. *Bhavana* (Levigation) 10. *Kaala Prakarsha* (Time duration) 11. *Bhajana* (Utensils)

The *Samskāras* can make on both the *āhara* and medicinal drugs. *Āhara* is innumerable types because of the combinations of drugs and *Samskāras* on Drugs.

Aparisankheya vikalpa: Dravyasamyogakaranabahulyat Ca.Su.25/36. It has innumerable variations due to abundance of substances, their combinations and preparations.

Some of the examples are: *Caraka* describing the importance of *ghrita* in *jirna Jwara* (Chronic fever) that all types of *Jirna jwara* (Chronic fever) intake of *ghrita* with proper drugs is recommended because *grita* pacifies *Vāta* due to unctuousness, *Kaphā* due to processing (*Samskāra*) pitta and heat due to coldness, hence in all chronic fevers *Ghrita* is wholesome like water on substances scorched fire. Focusing the *Samskāranuvartanam* quality of *Ghrita* *Caraka* has recommended siddha medicated *Ghrita* according to *Dosas* in *Jirna Jwara*⁸. (Ca.Nid.1/36)

Informing about the qualities of *Ghrita* *Caraka* quoted; cow *ghrita* promotes memory, intelligence, *Agni*, semen, *Ojas*, *kapha*, and *medas*: alleviates *Vāta*, *Pitta*, and Poison, insanity, phthisis, inauspiciousness and fever. It is the best for health. It has thousand potentialities and so, if used properly according to prescribed methods, exerts thousand types of actions. In this way thousands of actions can be performed by *ghrita*. Its potency can be increased by thousands of times if made specific appropriate *samskāras*⁹. (Ca.Su.27/232)

The same thing is told about *taila* (Sesame oil) also, the sesame oil is sweet with astringent as subsidiary taste, penetrating, hot, readily absorbed, aggravates *Pitta* and *Kapha*, is constipating, anti-diuretic, the best among the *Vāta* alleviating, strength promoting, beneficial for skin promotes intellect and appetite. It destroys all diseases due to combination of drugs and processing. *Taila* becomes elixir by *Samskara*¹⁰. (Ca.Su.27-287)

While describing the deictic incompatibility / Antagonistic food *Caraka* explained that *Dehdhatupratyanik* drugs make opposition to the *Dehdhatu*. That which is antagonistic in respect of Place (*Desha viruddha*), Time (*Kala viruddha*), Digestive fire (*Agniviruddha*), Dose (*Matraviruddha*), Suitability (*Satmyaviruddha*), *Dosa*, Processing (*Samskaraviruddha*), Potency (*Viryaviruddha*), Bowel (*Koshtaviruddha*), Health condition (*Awasthaviruddha*), Order (*Kramaviruddha*), Contraindication (*Parihar viruddha*), Indication (*Upchar viruddha*), Cooking (*Pakaviruddha*), Combination (*Samyogviruddha*), Palatability (*Hridayaviruddha*), richness in properties (*Sampadviruddha*), Rules of eating (*Vidhiviruddha*) is not wholesome for the person.

Antagonistic food is the cause of impotency (*Shandhya*), blindness (*Andha*), erysipelas (*Visarpa*), ascites (*Jalodar*), pustules (*Visphot*), insanity (*Unmāda*), fistula-in-ano (*Bhagandar*), fainting (*Murchya*), narcosis (*Mada*), Abdomen fullness (*Adhmāna*), spasm in throat (*Galgraha*), anaemia (*Pāndu*), *āma* (Toxins), *Visa* (Poison), leprosy (*Kushta*), *grahaniroga* (Tropical sprue), Oedema (*Shotha*), Acidity (*Amlapitta*), Fever (*Jwara*), rhinitis (*Pinasa*), genetic disorders (*Santāndosha*) and even death¹¹. (Ca.Su.26-102,103)

Hence *Caraka* explained that for the prevention of the diseases due to dietetic incompatibility in the beginning itself we should make the *Samskāra* of similar drugs on the body. In this way we can prevent such type of diseases. The process of *Vamana* (Emesis), *Virechan* (Purgation), should be carried out and *samshana* drugs should be administered in the body means such *Samskāras* should be done in the beginning itself. These are the measures which are used to counteract the above and other disorders caused by antagonistic such as emesis, purgation, use of antidotes for pacification and prior conditioning of the body with similar substances¹². (Ca.Su.26-104). Ayurveda has given equal weightage to body as well as mind. The daily regimen, sessional, regimen, suppressible non-suppressible urges are emphasized by Acharya. Achar Rasayan is the specialty of Ayurveda. These regimen and *āchar* Rasayan is nothing but the *Samskāras* on the body and Mind.

It is clear that with the help of *agnisamskara* we can make the changes in the *gunas* (Quality) of the drugs. After proper *Agnisamskar* these drugs can be easily compatible to the body. This is the real task of *Samskāras*. If the cover of pulses removed and fried well then it becomes *laghu* and easily digestible to the body. Same thing for vegetables also if it boiled well and added *sneha* and other ingredients it becomes useful for the body otherwise it will create problems. Meat soup we can prepare with different types of drugs then it can acquire the same properties of the drugs and it becomes best *doshshāmak*. *Godhuma* is heavy (Guru) in nature but due to *Samskāra* makes it *laghu* (Light).

Kāla is also responsible factor for *Samskāra*. It can also change the quality of the drug. For eg; The new rice is *madhur* and *Brimhan* in nature but one year old rice is more useful *sandhankar* and *mehhar*. (Su.Su 46/422) All the fruits are having good quality after complete ripen but *Bilwa* fruit is having good qualities at unripen stage. (Su.Su.46/209)

In the preparation of *Panchvidh Kashay kalpanā* specific *Samskāras* are required for the specific drug to achieve the highest potency of the drug.

Samskāras are a series of rituals that mark the improvements in various stages of the human life. It plays the prime role in child health system and overall development at each step of life. It also prevents diseases, adapt to environment for further survival, give individual identity and educate the child.

Ayurveda is considered as the *Upveda* of Atharvaveda. Ancient mythology described sixteen to forty *Sanskāra* (religious rites) for a person from conception to Death but at present 16 *Sanskāra* are as in practiced which are performed from conception to after death. These *Sanskāra* are related to appropriate growth and development of person.: 1.*Garbhāadhan* (sacrament of impregnation or conception) 2.*Pumsavana* (engendering a male issue) 3.*Simantonayana* (hair-parting) 4.*Jatakarma* (birth rituals e.g. At the time when the child is being born) 5.*Nāmakarana* (naming ceremony) 6.*Nishakrama* (first visit or outing ceremony) 7.*Annaprashana* (feeding ceremony) 8.*Chudakarma* or *mundan* (shaving of head) 9.*Karnavedhan* (piercing the earlobes) 10.*Upanayana* (blessed thread initiation) 11.*Vedarambha* (beginning of Vedic study) 12.*Samavartan* (end of studentship) 13.*Vānprastha* (renouncing the householder's life)14.*Vānprastha* (renouncing the householder's life)15.Sannyas (leading the life of a monk) 16.*Anteyeshthi* (death cremation)¹³

Samskāra in the Pali is *saṅkhāra* a useful word to explore if you are struggling to make sense of Buddhist doctrines. This word is defined by Buddhists in many ways—volitional formations; mental impressions; conditioned phenomena; dispositions; forces that condition psychic activity; forces that shape moral and spiritual development.

saṅkhāra also is the fourth of the Five *Skandhas* and the second link in the Twelve Links of Dependent Origination, so it's something that figures into many Buddhist teachings. It's also closely linked to karma.

According to Theravada Buddhist monk the word *saṅkhāra* has no exact parallel in English. "The word *saṅkhāra* is derived from the prefix *sam*, meaning 'together,' joined to the noun *kara*, doing, making. *saṅkhāra* are thus 'co-doings,' things that act in concert with other things, or things that are made by a combination of other things. what are the Twelve Links? There are at least a couple of ways to understand them. Most commonly, the Twelve Links are the factors that cause beings to become, live, suffer, die, and become again. The Twelve Links also are sometimes described as the chain of mental activities that lead to suffering¹⁴.

The first link is *avijja* or ignorance, “*Avijjā paccayā saṅkhārā*” (Ignorance as a root cause for immoral/unfruitful actions and thoughts). This is ignorance of the true nature of reality. *Avijja* leads to *saṅkhāra* —mental formations— in the form of ideas about reality. We become attached to our ideas and unable to see them as illusions. Again, this is closely linked to karma. The force of mental formations leads to. *viññāṇa*, awareness. And that takes us to *nama-rupa*, name, and form, which is the beginning of our self-identity—I am. And on to the other eight links.

Major portion/segment of mind as described in Pali literature: *viññāṇa* - consciousness 6 *viññāṇa* (eye, ear, tongue, nose, mind, body), *saññā* - perception - job is to recognise and evaluation, *vedanā*, - sensation, *saṅkhāra* - job is to react, this gives fruit, this is the volition of the mind. Types of *saṅkhāra* are like line drawn on water, like line drawn on sand on beach and like line drawn on rock, deep line¹⁵.

When we put the word *saṅkhāra* under our microscope, we see compressed within it the entire worldview of the *Dhamma*. The active *saṅkhāra* consisting in *kammically* active volitions perpetually create the *saṅkhāra* of the five aggregates that constitute our being. As long as we continue to identify with the five aggregates (the work of ignorance) and to seek enjoyment in them (the work of craving), we go on spewing out the volitional formations that build up future combinations of aggregates. Just that is the nature of samsara: an unbroken procession of empty but efficient *saṅkhāra* producing still other *saṅkhāra*, riding up in fresh waves with each new birth, swelling to a crest, and then crashing down into old age, illness, and death. Yet on it goes, shrouded in the delusion that we're really in control, sustained by an ever-tantalizing, ever receding hope of final satisfaction.

When, however, we take up the practice of the Dhamma, we apply a brake to this relentless generation of *saṅkhāra*. We learn to see the true nature of the *saṅkhāra*, of our own five aggregates: as unstable, conditioned processes rolling on with no one in charge. Thereby we switch off the engine driven by ignorance and craving, and the process of *kammic* construction, the production of active *saṅkhāra*, is effectively deconstructed. By putting an end to the constructing of conditioned reality, we open the door to what is ever-present but not constructed, not conditioned: the *asankhata-dhatu*, the unconditioned element. This is *Nibbana*, the Deathless, the stilling of volitional activities, the final liberation from all conditioned formations¹⁶

Conclusion

Drugs can be easily compatible to the body due to *Samskāra*

If physician wants to succeed in the treatment the knowledge of *Samskāras* is essential (*Siddhiupaya*)

If you want to maintain health (*Swashtya*) then *Samskāras* are helpful in preventive aspect also.

Different types of medicine preparation needs various *Samskāras*. It has innumerable variations due to abundance of substances their combinations and preparations.

Samskāras are necessary for detoxification (*Shodhana*)

We can increase useful properties and decrease harmful properties of food and medicines through *Samskāra*

Not only preventive and curative but also spiritually for the emancipation *Samskāra* plays very vital role as per *Pāli* literature teaching of the Buddha.

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