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Relation Between *Oja* And *Bala* : A Conceptual Review

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Abstract :

In *Ayurveda*, *Bala* means strength, which refers to both physical and mental power, and is frequently used interchangeably with *Ojas*. *Ojas* is the subtle, vital essence or nectar of the body, the ultimate byproduct of healthy digestion and tissue formation, representing peak vitality, immunity (*Vyadhikshamatva*), and spiritual strength. *Bala* is a multifaceted concept that encompasses both physical and psychological strength, as well as the capacity developed in reaction to antigen exposure and the body's resistance to disease manifestation. Additionally, it is often used interchangeably with elements that contribute to strength, nourishment, and stability within the body, including *Oja*, *Vyadhikshamatva*, *Balya*, *Sara*, *Balavridhikara Bhava*, and *Prakrita Sleshma*. *Ojas* is the component within the body that provides strength, energy, and vitality, enhances immune function, and supports overall health. This article focused on the relation between *Oja* and *Bala* concept in *Ayurveda*.

Keywords: *Ayurveda*, *Bala*, *Ojas*, *Vyadhikshamatva*, *Sara*, *Balavrudhikar Bhava*.

Introduction:

Ayurveda fosters comprehensive well-being by focusing on the interrelated aspects of physical, mental, and social health. In this context, *Bala* is defined as the body's inherent strength and ability to combat illness—incorporating not just physical stamina, but also immune functionality, metabolic equilibrium, and psychological fortitude. *Ayurveda* seeks to enhance overall well-being, prevent disease, and offer comprehensive treatments for ailments. Its preventive approaches focus on empowering individuals to bolster their immune systems.

The promotion of positive health is fundamentally associated with the functional integrity of the body's internal environment, its regulatory systems, and natural defenses. In *Ayurvedic* terminology, the concept of *Bala* encompasses all these elements on a broad scale. Health and longevity are contingent upon *Bala*.

Ojas represents the ultimate and remarkable essence of *sapta dhatu*. Like *sapta dhatu*, it derives nourishment from *ahara rasa*. Some scholars refer to it as *upadhatu*. However, it is important to note that *ojas* does not provide nourishment to the body, thus it cannot be classified as *dhatu*. Unlike *upadhatu*, it circulates throughout the body via *mahadhamnis*, making it inappropriate to categorize it under *upadhatu*. While it is described as the essence of *sapta dhatu*, its *prana dharak Karma* prevents it from being classified as *dhatu*. *Ayurveda* is the science of life, primarily focused on preserving the health of living beings, which includes both disease prevention and treatment. To achieve these objectives, *Ayurveda* outlines several fundamental principles related to *Sharir Rachna*, *Sharir Kriya*, *Chikitsa*, and more. Among these principles the concept of *Oja* and *Vyadhikshamatva* or *Bala* as detailed in *Ayurvedic* literature.

Material and Method :

1. Classical text of *Ayurveda* – *Charak Samhita*, *Sushrut Samhita*, *Ashtang Hruday*
2. Other texts related with *Ayurveda*
3. Various articles related to the *Oja* and *Bala* published in national and international journals

Conceptual Review :

Etymology and derivation

The word *Ojas* is derived from the Sanskrit root “*ubja*” and “*asun*” suffix.

It means strength, luster.

Synonyms

Bala (strength), *sneha* (unctuous part); *prasad* (pure form), *sara* (supreme, excellent state), *Rasa* (lymphatics), *mahat* (prime), *dhari* (which sustains the integrity of life), *Sarva dhatu sneha* (unctuous part of body components), *parama teja* (active principle), *Jivashonita* (vital principle of blood), *shukra* (reproductive components), *shukra sara* (purest form of reproductive components), *shukra mala* (metabolic byproduct)

Formation of Ojas

Ojas represents the essence of *Shukra* and *Artava*, which is referred to as *Garbha rasa*. This *Garbha rasa* plays a crucial role in nourishing the embryo. During the process of cardiogenesis in the foetus, the *Ojas* that nourishes the *Garbha* enters the heart, initiating cardiac activity. Just as thousands of bees gather nectar from fruits and flowers to produce honey, the essence of all *dhatu*s constitutes *Ojas*. It is the final product of various physiological processes. The extract, or quintessence, of the *Sapta Dhatus* (the seven bodily tissues ranging from *rasa* to *shukra Dhatu*) is known as *Ojas*, which serves as the foundation for biological strength, thus referred to as *Bala*. “*Tatra Rasadinam Sukrantanam dhatunam yattparam tejayata khalvOjasstadeva balamityuchyate, Svashastrasiddhantat*”.

Types & Quantity

Oja exists in two distinct forms:

1. Supreme (*para*)
2. Mediocre (*apara*)

The supreme form (*para ojas*) is the crucial element that underpins the vitality of life. Its presence in the body is quantified as eight drops (*bindu*) and is situated in the heart. Typically, it remains stable within the body, maintaining an equilibrium state. The loss of this component can lead to death. The mediocre form (*apara ojas*) is produced during the metabolic processes of each *dhatu*. Its quantity in the body is quantified as half *anjali* (a personified measurement unit). It is found in all components of the body and is expressed as the essence of *dhatu* (*sara*). This can be identified as factors that contribute to immunity.

Location :

The supreme form (*para Ojas*) is present in the heart. The mediocre form (*apara Ojas*) is present all over the body.

Functions of Ojas

“*Tatra balen sthir upchit Mansta Sarvcheshta Svaprtighate SavarVarnPrasado Bhayanam Abhyantranama ch Karnanamat karya Pratipattir bhavati*”.

1. **BalenSthir Upchit Mansta** - Promotes the stability and development of muscle.
2. **Sarvcheshta Svaprtighata** – The capacity to engage in all activities without obstruction.
3. **Savarvarn prasado** - Enhances vocal clarity and skin brightness.

4. *Bhayanam Abhyantranam Karnamakarya pratipati* – Ensures the normal operation of external (motor) and internal (sensory) organs.

Symptoms of VitiatioN Of Oja :

Symptoms of Ojas Visransa:

- 1) *Sandhi Vishlesh* (looseness of joints).
- 2) *Gatra Sada* (weakness of the body)
- 3) *Dosha Chyavanam* (Tridosha move away from their normal seats)
- 4) *Kriya Sannirodha* (inability to perform normal function)

Symptoms of Ojas Vyapad

- 1) *Stabha Gurugatrata* (stiffness and feeling of heaviness in the body).
- 2) *Vata Shopha* (swelling caused by vata dosha impairment).
- 3) *Varna Bheda* (change in complexion)
- 4) *Glani* (exhaustion)
- 5) *Tandra*(drowsiness)
- 6) *Nidra*(sleep)

Symptoms of Ojas Kshaya

According to Sushruta Samhita

- 1) *Murchha* (unconsciousness)
- 2) *Mansakshaay* (muscle weakness)
- 3) *Moha* (mental disturbances specially in judgement)
- 4) *Pralap* (delirium)
- 5) *Mrityu*(death)

According to Charak Samhita

- 1) *Bibheti* (person suffer from fear complex)
- 2) *Durbalo abhikshanam* (physical and mental debility)
- 3) *Dhyayati* (worries always without apparent reason)
- 4) *Vyathita Indriya* (feels discomfort in sense organs)
- 5) *Duschhaya*(loss of complexion of body)
- 6) *Durmana*(feeble mental stamina)
- 7) *Ruksha* (dryness)
- 8) *Shyama* (skin becomes black)
- 9) *Kashya* (emaciation of body)

Functions of *Oja* :

Preserve the existence of living beings.

- Without this, life cannot persist.
- The fundamental nature of the embryo.
- Essential elements are established in this context.
- Homeostasis, which refers to the maintenance of bodily equilibrium.
- Regulates the functions of the body.
- Various states related to the body are appropriately managed.
- Eliminate harmful doshas.
- Foster strong and well-developed muscles.
- Unimpeded movements.
- Clear voice quality.
- Clear skin complexion.
- Proper functioning of external (motor) organs.
- Proper functioning of internal (sensory) organs.
- The presence of this ensures the survival of the body.

Concept of *Bala* :

Prakritakapha : is referred to as *Bala* according to *Charaka*, however, it has since been redefined as *Ojas* (*Shlaishmik oja*), which represents the body's *Saara*. Additionally, *Daurbalya*, or the deficiency of *Bala*, is a characteristic of *Oja Kshaya*.

Vyadhikshamatva:

Ojas represents the vitality of the body and is crucial for *vyadhikshamatva*. The ability or strength of the body to combat diseases and to resist the onset of illness is referred to as *Vyadhikshamatva*. *Ojas* imparts the power of *vyadhikshamatva* within the body, as its role is to avert the emergence of diseases and to provide defense against those that are already present.

Classification of *Bala* :

1. **Sahaj Bala** (natural strength): - *Sahaj Bala* refers to the inherent strength of the body. It develops during the formation of the body from the mother's *artava* and the father's *shukra*. *Sahaj Bala* is characterized by the predominance of *doshas* in the *garbha* constitution. Additionally, *Sahaj Bala* is influenced by the strength of both parents at the time of conception and the monthly regimens followed by the mother during pregnancy (*mansanumasik garbhini paricharya*).
2. **Kalaja Bala** (seasonal or age): - Both physical and mental strength are also affected by and change with the seasons and the individual's age.
3. **Yukyikrut bala** (The act of intelligence): - The physical and mental strength that relies on a proper diet, regular physical activities, medications, *Rasayan* (rejuvenating substances), and *Vajikaran* (a process that primarily nourishes the *shukra*) is referred to as *yuktikrit bala*.

Conclusion :

The notion of *Vyadhikshmatva* is extensively documented in *Ayurvedic* texts. *Vyadhikshamatva*, which is synonymous with *Swastha*, *Bala*, and *Ojas*, represents the fundamental resistance of the body in today's world, where new types of diseases emerge daily. Individuals possess varying levels of *Vyadhikshamatva*, which is influenced by factors such as *Oja*, *Bala*, seasonal changes, diet and regimen, *Anupana*, *rasa*, and more. It is essential to wisely incorporate these elements into one's lifestyle to strengthen both the body and mind, enabling them to cope with the physical and mental challenges of contemporary life. Therefore, *Ayurveda* is a comprehensive science that employs a multi-faceted approach and includes specific methods to enhance immunity.

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