



How Epistemology Used For Siddha Clinical Diagnostic Methods

¹Dr.R.Prabakaran ²Dr.R.Venkatesh

1. Associate Professor, Department of Maruthuvam, Nandha Siddha Medical College and Hospital, Erode-52, India
2. Assistant Professor, Department of Siddha Maruthuva Moolathathuvam, Nandha Siddha Medical College and Hospital, Erode-52, India

Abstract

Siddha is one of the ancient's medical systems in India considered as the mother medicine of ancient Tamil in South India. The term siddha means achievements and siddhars were saintly persons who achieved results in medicine. The siddha system is based on combination of ancient medicinal practice and spiritual disciplines as well as alchemy and mysticism. Siddhars held that the object of their study was preserved and prolong life and them belived humans to live according to laws of nature. According to sivagnanasiddhiyar discovering epistemology (alavai). Alavai referred to in vernacular as pramanam. The word prama means knowledge. The medium through which knowledge is acquired is pramanam. Alavai is also known as knowledge scale and used for siddha clinical diagnostic methods.

Key words: Alavai, Epistemology, Pramanam, siddha diagnostic methods

Introduction:

Siddha system is one of the oldest of medicine in India mainly practiced in South India. The roots of this system are intertwined with the culture of ancient Tamil civilization. The term Siddha means achievements and Siddhars were saintly people who achieved results in medicine. Eighteen Siddhars were said to have contributed towards the development of this medical system. The uniqueness of Siddha medicine lies in its holistic approach the physical, mental, social and emotional well-being are fostered and by adopting appropriate lifestyle practices, dietary regimens, safe and effective drugs sourced from the surroundings and therapies specific to this system. In modern world, now a day's many of methods to indent the disease like physical examination, signs and symptoms, laboratory diagnosis, differential diagnosis etc. the predecessor of this is the siddharAlavai (epistemology). This healing science has seen an impressive transformation in both academic and clinical practice into a discipline of great value. The siddha has also been defined as referring to one who has attained a siddhi. The siddhis as paranormal abilities are considered emergent abilities of an individual that is on the path to siddhahood.

“Alavi kaandal karuthal urai abavam porul opparenbar
Alavai melum olibunmai itheehathodeyalbena nan
Alavai kanbar avaiyitrin melum araivar avaiyellam
Alavaikandal karuthal urai endrimmoondrilladangum”

- Sivaganana siddhiar alavai en.6

As such, we shall explain certain terms which are used frequently in these discussions. Pramana (Alavai) is proof. Prameya is the thing proved Pramatha is the person who investigates; Pramithi is Intelligence cognizing the proof.

Epistemology is known as alavai in siddha terminology. There are kandal (observation), karuthal(inference), urai(literature), abavam(non-perception), porul(presumption), uvamai(comparison) there six categories are primary epistemology (Alavai) and then ozhibu (inference by elimination), unmai (probability), idhegam (tradition), iyalbu (natural interference) are secondary epistemology. This scale is also known as knowledge of scales and can used also siddha diagnostic methods.

S.no	Types of Alavai	Definition	How to Use in Clinical Diagnostic Methods
1	Kandal	Pratyaksha (Kandal) is the direct and correct perception of things without doubt and mistakes and without the sense of differentiation.	Kandal Pramana involves measuring or assessing observable symptoms, signs, or test results to diagnose or monitor a disease. This approach helps healthcare professionals make informed decisions about treatment and management. e.g Diabetes: Measuring blood sugar levels to assess the severity of diabetes.
2	Karuthal	Anumana, we infer things hidden from certain data by knowledge of the inseparable connections (by succession or co existence)	Some diseases can cause fluid accumulation in the peritoneal cavity, leading to ascites. The specific diagnosis is based on a combination of medical history, physical examination, imaging tests, and laboratory results. e.g. fluid accumulation in the peritoneal cavity
3	Urai	Agama is the saying of the great saints and enlightened people, things which cannot be seen or felt are said to be with full surety.	These diseases may not always exhibit visible symptoms or physical manifestations, but their presence can be confirmed through various medical history and literature evidence. e.g. Mental health conditions
4	Abhava	Abavam refers to the negation or denial of a fact or existence	In the context of diseases, the absence or denial of a particular condition or symptom is notable. e.g. Hypothyroidism - Absence of thyroid hormones (negation of normal thyroid function)
5	Arthapatti	When there is doubt about the existence of a cause or substance that is necessarily related to another substance, and if that doubt arises in a place where both substances are present, then it is necessary to demonstrate the existence of the substance in question by showing its opposite	The circumstances (myxedema, dry skin, and hair loss) are necessarily related to the disease (hypothyroidism). The presence of these symptoms logically concludes the existence of hypothyroidism, even if the thyroid hormone levels are not directly measured.
6	Upamana	Analogous measurement is the method of using the quantity or quality of one thing as an analogy to measure the quantity or quality of another thing	Asthma - Just as a person may struggle to breathe through a straw, people with asthma may struggle to breathe due to inflamed airways.

7	Ozhibu	ozhibu(Inference by exception) is a reasoning technique used to draw conclusions by identifying exceptions to a general rule or pattern	In medicine, a doctor may use inference by exception to identify a rare disease or condition that does not fit the typical symptoms or treatment outcomes. By analyzing the exceptions, the doctor may be able to develop a new treatment plan or identify a new risk factor
8	Unmai	Probability is a fundamental concept that helps us understand and analyze uncertain events. It is essential for making informed decisions.	Many people with diabetes also have high blood pressure, which can increase the risk of heart disease and stroke.
9	Aytigam	Aitihika Pramana refers to the knowledge or understanding that comes from repeated verbal instructions or direct experience.	How Aitihika Pramana can help individuals understand diseases and their management through repeated verbal instructions and direct experience. 1. Heart Disease: Repeatedly being told by a doctor to manage cholesterol levels and make lifestyle changes can lead to an understanding of the condition and its management. Experience: Experiencing the symptoms of heart disease, such as chest pain and shortness of breath, and seeing the impact on one's quality of life can lead to a deeper understanding of the condition.
10	Iyalbu	Natural Inference refers to the ability to understand and recognize the inherent properties or characteristics of an object or a living being, and to make inferences based on that understanding.	1. Diabetes: If a person is overweight, sedentary, and has a family history of diabetes, we can infer that they are at a higher risk of developing diabetes.

Conclusion:

The Siddha system of medicine, with its profound philosophical and scientific foundations, presents a unique approach to diagnosing and treating diseases through the lens of Alavai or epistemology. These diagnostic tools rooted in observation, inference, literature, and traditional knowledge form a comprehensive framework that extends beyond physical symptoms to include psychological, environmental, and spiritual dimensions of health. The integration of primary and secondary epistemological methods enables Siddha practitioners to assess disease in a holistic manner, respecting the individuality of each patient. In an era dominated by modern diagnostic technologies, revisiting and validating these time-tested traditional methodologies can enrich clinical practice. By bridging ancient wisdom with modern evidence-based approaches, Siddha epistemology holds promise for advancing personalized and integrative healthcare.

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