A Bird’s Eye View on Ojakshaya with Special Reference to Pandu (Anemia)

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ABSTRACT

It is considered that Ojas is a constituent that embodies the ultimate essence of each one of the body’s Dhatus or tissue elements. It is one of the Pran-ayatanas or the “seat of life.” Ojas is also regarded as the live, luminous energy that resides within the human body. Every bodily component needs it to function efficiently. Both physiological and psychological elements have an impact on it. The classical Ayurveda text describes Ojakshaya as one of the Ojaskara which may be prevalent in various diseases. Referring to our ancient text, Pandu Roga is a disorder brought on by Ojakshaya in the body. Clinical evaluations of Pandu patients can reveal the presence of Ojakshaya; if this information is kept in mind during treatment, it may prevent the disease from progressing further and leading to problems. The relationship between Ojakshaya and Pandu is discussed in old Ayurvedic texts. The findings indicate that Ojakshaya may be more common in Pandu patients. The goal of this review article is to comprehend Oja and Ojakshaya and how they relate to Pandu.

1. INTRODUCTION

The texts of Vedas explain a novel idea of Oja, or the life force of the body, which is arranged for biological strength, including immunity. According to Sushruta, Oja is described as the biological strength of an individual and as the Paramateja of the Saptadhatus. Oja is listed as one of the Das-prana-ayatan by Acharya Charaka.

Oja is responsible for the strength, consciousness, purity in thoughts, creating positive feelings in every situation, better immunity, longevity, intelligence, and memory. Wherever, there is a disarrangement of Oja in the body, at that location, the diseases strike.

When adequate amounts of high-quality Oja are present, the body remains healthy. Numerous diseases arise in our bodies because of the Oja Vikriti (pathology of Oja), which includes Ojavirarsna (movement from its usual spot), Ojavayapat (vitiated by Dushta Dosha and Dushy), and Ojakshaya (loss).

In Ayurveda, Rakta has been considered a key factor for the Jeevana (life), Prinana (provides nutrition to other dhatus), Dharana, and Poshana karma of the body. It is seen that Rakta gets vitiated by Doshas, mainly by Pitta dosha as Rakta is Pittavargiya and disease-like Pandu appears. Pandu roga is Pitta pradhanavyadhi. Due to hetusevana, Pitta pradhana tridosha gets vitiated and is circulated in the whole body causing Shithilata in all dhatus which ultimately reduces Rakta and Meda dhatu. Decrease in Sneha and Rakta Dhatu, Rupa Oja guna, Varna, Bala are lost, and thus, there is Pandu roga. Pandu Varna (whitish yellow) is mentioned as one among the lakshana of Pandu Roga. As per modern medicine, pallor discoloration is also a characteristic feature of anemia.

The primary cause of Panduroga is Pitta dushti, which subsequently vitiates Rakta and results in Pandubhava. Balakshaya, Varnakshaya, and Ojakshaya follow from this.

1.1. Aim and Objectives

The aim and objectives of the study are as follows:

- To compile, study, and evaluate the concept of Ojas, Oja Vikruti from the available classical literature, commentaries, research works, articles on the Internet, and available information in allied basic science.
- To study of Oja kshaya in etiopathogenesis Pandu (Anemia).
2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This article’s contents are based on a review of several contemporary books, journals, and classical Ayurvedic literature. The concept of Oja and Ojakshaya in Pandu was thoroughly and in-depthly understood through the collection, analysis, and discussion of materials pertaining to Ojas, Ojakshaya, Pandu, and anemia.

2.1. Ojas Formation

It is said to be created at the exact moment of fertilization when Shukra and Shonita merge. At that point, Paka of Shukra dhatu (both Shukra and Shonita) is said to have taken place, and two entities – Sara and Mala – are created, according to the same principle as Rasadi dhatwagni vyapara. This Ojas will fulfill its role as Avastambha and sustain Garbha’s life. Further, nutrition and boost up the quantity of Ojas to Ardhanjali takes place by Ahararasa, which is obtained from the mother’s body and possesses qualities like Ojas and it also concurrently nourishes the developing embryo. In the later period of intrauterine life, when the heart is matured, it is processed into the heart and with the vessels connected to it, circulates all over the body of the fetus, every tissue of the fetal body is supplied with Ojas, and is maintained by it. Thus, it is claimed that pranas is positioned within it. Ojas is therefore considered to be prevalent during the whole intrauterine life cycle.

2.2. Characteristic features of Oja

Acharya Sushruta has described qualities of Oja in Sutrasthana,

i. Somatmaka (cooling/water element)
ii. Snigdha (greasy/viscous)
iii. Shukla (white)
iv. Sita (cold in potency)
v. Sihira (steady)
vi. Sara (expansile)
vii. Vivikta (best nutrition/clear)
viii. Mridu (soft)
ix. Mrtsna (moist/slimy)
x. Pran-ayatanam (important seat of life).

2.3. Types of Oja

Ojas is deliberate to be of two kinds, namely (1) Para oja and (2) Apara oja.

Para ojas is subtle in nature and is in minute quantity measuring only eight drops located in the heart while Apara Ojas is gross, that is, half Anjali in quantity spread all over the body. Para oja is a life factor and its injury and insult may lead to instantaneous death. Apara oja is responsible for gross biological and immune strength.

2.4. Functions of Oja

2.4.1. In Utpatti

Ojas is said to be present in the sperm and ovum in the form of their Sara or essence, in the absence of which, fertilization does not take place.

2.4.1.2. In the growth and development of Garbha

After fertilization Sara of Shukra and Shonita get converted into a new substance, which is said to be Garbharasadrasah, it is the only source of nutrition for Garbha for its growth and development.

2.4.2. In Sthiti avastha

2.4.2.1. In maintenance of health

Dosha, Dhatu, and Mala are the fundamental units of the body, among these, Doshas are said to sustain the body in their normal state. However, these Doshas even in their physiological state of equilibrium cannot sustain a body that is devoid of Ojas.

It is also said that all the activities of the living body may it be Kayika, Vachika, Mansika take place smoothly if it is contained with Ojas. Thus, it can be inferred that Ojas influences the function of physical, sensory, psychic, and other higher faculties of the body and maintains the homeostatic condition of the body.

2.5. As a preventive measure

The word Bala used as the synonym of Ojas by Sushruta is because of the cause-and-effect relationship existing between Ojas and Bala, and hence, the term Bala in any context represents the status of Bala. Vyadhi pratikar Shakti depends on the Bala, hence, it is not only responsible entity for Vyadhiutpada Pratibandhakara but also Vyadhibalavirodhitwa.

2.6. OJAKSHAYA

The deficiency of Oja quantitatively and/or qualitatively or functionally is called Ojakshaya.

2.7. Etiology of Ojakshaya

- Abhigata (Infliction of injury)
- Kshaya (Decrement of constituent)
- Krodha (Infuriate)
- Shoka (Affliction)
- Dhyan (Anxious thoughts)
- Shrama (Fatigue)
- Kshudha (Hunger).

2.8. Manifestation of Ojakshaya

2.8.1. According to Charaka Samhita

- Vibheta (person is constantly suffers from a fear complex)
- Durvaloabhikshamna (physical and mental debility)
- Dhyayati (Worries always without apparent reason)
- Duschchhaya (developed impaired or loss of complexion of the body)
- Durmana (bad mentation or feeble mental stamina)
- Raksha (dryness or roughness)
- Kshama (skin becomes black)
- Karshya (Emaciation of the body).

2.8.2. According to Sushruta Samhita

The Oja Vikriti is described in Sushruta Samhita as three stages Ojavirsansa, Ojayayapad, and Ojakshaya. The details are given in Table 1 below.

3. OJAKSHAYA AND PATHOGENESIS OF PANDU

The pathology of Panduroga is mainly concerned with the vitiation of Pitta which in turn vitiates the Rakta, leading to the condition of
4. DISCUSSION

In our classical texts, it is mentioned that in Panduroga, aggravated Pitta vitiates the Dhatus which later loses their integrity and subsequently depletes Varna, Bala, Sneha, etc., listed as the Gunas of Oja. As the Pitta Dosha is the prime factor for the manifestation of Pandu, here Pitta Dosha happens as the secondary cause after the Agni Dosha. When due to the Apathya Ahara, Vihara, and Agantuya Nidanas, Agnimandyu happens which will result in the production of Ama Visha later on affects the Garahani which reduces the Grahanam Shakti of the individual. If this condition is not properly managed, it goes to the secondary stage where the production of Ama is more and that creates Pitta Dushti. Once the Rasa Dhatu and Rakta Dhatu vitiates, due to the Ashraya Ashrayi Bhava of Pitta Dosha, the functions of Pitta such as Pakti, Ushma, Darshana, Kshudha, Trishna, Ruchi, Prabha, Medha, Dhee, Shourya, Tanutva, and Mardavata of the body also get affected, due to which the Pandu can manifest with almost the similar Lakshanas. As modern medicine defines anemia as the reduction in hemoglobin and red blood corpuscles levels, in ayurveda, we cannot completely correlate Pandu with that of anemia as in Pandu all systems of the body are affected where there can be the difference in various other blood parameters also. This stage of Pandu when it does not get properly managed can deteriorate the body as there is a hamper in the absorption of the food that results in impaired cell metabolism.

As the Rasa and Rakta Dhatu got vitiated, it creates hampering to the further Dhatus, and the entire Dhatus Paka process got hampered where there cannot be the production of Oja. As Oja is defined as the essence of Sapta Dhatus, the non-production of any one of the seven Dhatus can alter the production of Oja which can reduce the Sharira Bala.

As in the anemia, pallor is mentioned as the prime symptom, resembling the manifestation of Ojakshaya where discoloration is said to be one of the features described by Charaka as Dushchaya (developed impaired or loss of complexion in the body) and Varna Bheda (change in complexion and discoloration) by Sushruta.

At present, all the treatments available can only increase the hemoglobin of an anemic patient but on the other hand, the immunity of the patient continues to decrease, so in this way, maintenance of the immunity or Ojakshaya is an important factor to prevent the complication and proper treatment of disease as Oja being the responsible factor for maintaining Bala.

5. CONCLUSION

The usage of contemporary medications, poor eating habits, and current lifestyle choices are all contributing factors to the rising number of Pandu Vyadhi patients these days. As per the Ayurveda etiology, signs and symptoms of Pandu Roga can only be correlated with anemia. As we can understand, Pandu is better to be considered as a stage, before entering to any Roga Avastha, and Prabha Hani (pallor) is only one among the Lakshana of Pandu. Hence, it is evident that Pandu is a condition that has an impact on multi-systems of the body and diverse types of presentations that can range from simple pallor to life-threatening complications. When the stage of Pandu is not managed, it can lead to the Oja Kshaya which may deteriorate the Bala of an individual.

6. ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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7. AUTHORS’ CONTRIBUTIONS

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9. ETHICAL APPROVALS

This study does not require ethical clearance as it is a review study.

10. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Nil.

11. DATA AVAILABILITY

This is an original manuscript, and all data are available for only review purposes from the principal investigators.

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REFERENCES

### Table 1: The Oja Vikriti Stages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ojas Visransa (First stage)</th>
<th>Ojas Vyapad (Second stage)</th>
<th>Ojakshaya (Third stage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sandhi Vishlesh (looseness of joints)</td>
<td>Sabdha Gurugatrata (Stiffness and</td>
<td>Marchha (unconsciousness or fainting)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feeling of heaviness in the body)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gatrasada (weakness of the body)</td>
<td>VataShopha (swelling caused by Vata Dosh impairment)</td>
<td>Mansakshaya (decrease of muscle)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dosha Chyavana (provoked Tridosh as moves away from their normal seats)</td>
<td>Varna Bheda (change in complexion or discoloration)</td>
<td>Moha (mental disturbance, especially in judgment)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kriyasannirodha (inability to perform normal functions)</td>
<td>Glani (Exhaustion)</td>
<td>Agyan (loss of sense)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shrama (lethargy in organs)</td>
<td>Tanda (drowsiness or stupor)</td>
<td>Pralap (delirium)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aprachuryam Kriyanam (it also results in the impairment of Kayik, Vachik, and Mansik function of the body.)</td>
<td>Nidra (sleep)</td>
<td>Mrityu (death)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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[10]: Additional notes or references regarding the specific terms or conditions.