



### Literature Review of *Brahmacharya* as Pathway for healthy living.

Ganesh S. Puradkar<sup>1</sup>, Saurabh Ravindra Shirishkar\*<sup>2</sup>, Sujay Randive<sup>3</sup>

1. Associate Professor, Samhita & Siddhant Department, Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Sion, Mumbai, Maharashtra.
2. PG Scholar, Samhita & Siddhant Department, Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Sion, Mumbai, Maharashtra.
3. Reader, Department Of Samhita, Bhagwant Ayurvedic College & Bhagwant Hospital, Muzaffarnagar (U.P.)

\*Corresponding author: [shirishkarsaurabh@gmail.com](mailto:shirishkarsaurabh@gmail.com)

#### ABSTRACT

*Ayurved* is science of life, having aims to live healthy life and cure diseases. In *Ayurved*, concept of *Trayoupstambha* is mentioned which leads to healthy life. *Trayoupstambha* means three sub pillars which gives healthy life. Out of these three sub pillars '*Brahmacharya*' is one, which assists healthy living being. *Brahmacharya* results in conservation of *Shukra Dhatu* & *Shukra Dhatu* is essence of *Ahara*. *Shukra Dhatu* is responsible for *Bala*, *Virya*, *Yasha*, *Dhairya*, *Preeti*. Hence these qualities ultimately lead to healthy life. Physical & mental health is achieved through *Brahmacharya*. So, this is literature study to review *Brahmacharya* concept, its various parameters & its significant role in healthy living.

**Keywords:** *Ayurved*, *Brahmacharya*, *Trayoupstambha*, *Shukra Dhatu*.

#### INTRODUCTION

In *Ayurved*, there are various principles related to different aspects of life which gives direction to be healthy and free from disease throughout the life. '*Trayo - upastambha*' is one of those principles. According to *Charaka* '*Tridanda*' means *Mana*, *Aatma*, *Sharir* are main pillars of life & According to *Sushrut* '*Tristhuna*' means *Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha* are main pillars of life. So, these two will be supported by *Trayoupstambha* which are *Aahar*, *Nidra* & *Brahmacharya*. *Brahmacharya* is made up of two components which are '*Brahma*' & '*Charya*'. '*Brahma*' means the absolute, eternal truth, ultimate reality & supreme God-head. '*Charya*' means 'to follow'. So *Brahmacharya* means the virtuous way of lifestyle or way of behaviour to achieve ultimate reality, eventually which leads to healthy living. *Brahmacharya* indirectly helps to other two *upastambha* to protect life. Hence, major importance is given to *Brahmacharya*.

## AIM & OBJECTIVES

1. To review literature of *Brahmacharya* concept.
2. To emphasize its role in healthy living.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

*Brahmacharya* phenomenon given in many *Samhitas* like *Charak Samhita*, *Sushrut Samhita*, *Ashtang Hridaya*, *Yadnyavalkyasmruti* etc. In *Charak Samhita*, 11<sup>th</sup> chapter called '*Tisreshaniya Adhyay*' which comes under '*Nirdesh Chatushka*' (group of 7 chapters) of *Sutrasthana* gives knowledge about *Brahmacharya*. In this chapter, to achieve *Trividha Eshanas* (3 wishes) of life 7 *Trikas* (Triads) are explained<sup>(1)</sup>. Out of these 7 *Trikas* one is *Trayoupastambha*. *Trayoupastambha* consists of two components '*Traya*' which means three in numbers & '*Upastambha*' which means sub pillars. These *Trayoupastambha* are *Ahara*, *Nidra* & *Brahmacharya*. If these three are maintained in regulated manner through *Yukti* (proper management) they act as sub pillars by providing strength, complexion till the end of life, its necessary that a person does not indulge in any activities which are harmful to health<sup>(2)</sup>.

*Acharya Charak* has mentioned that *Brahmacharya* is most superior in providers of best life. Hence eventually *Brahmacharya* improves quality of life<sup>(3)</sup>. *Sushrut* in *Sushrut Samhita Chikitsa Sthan* mentioned that *Brahmacharya* if follows properly it leads to improvement of *Ayu* (life)<sup>(4)</sup>. *Acharya Vagbhat* in *Ashtang Hridaya Sutrasthan* mentioned similarly that if *Ahara*, *Nidra* & *Brahmacharya* maintained in proper regulated manner as mentioned in *Shastra* they act as strong pillars for healthy life like strong pillars hold house<sup>(5)</sup>.

### **Brahmacharya Definition:**

- *Chakrapani* has stated that *Brahmacharya* means control over *Indriyas* with purity of *Mana* to achieve

*Brahma Dnyan*. It's very important that this control should be done very tactfully because over control, less or no control leads to *Manasik Kshobha*<sup>(6)</sup>.

- *Brahmacharya* is not always abstinence from *Maithun karma*, it also includes practicing *Maithun Karma* with disciplines or regulations as mentioned in *Rutukala* considered as *Brahmacharya*<sup>(7)</sup>.
- It is also stated that *Brahmacharya* is path to achieve *Moksha*, one such path is by keeping in check activities of *Karmendriya* such as *Upastha* which helps in maintaining life span is *Brahmacharya*<sup>(8)</sup>.
- *Acharya Sushrut* has mentioned that regulated control over all *Indriya* is *Brahmacharya*<sup>(9)</sup>.
- *Brahmacharya* is one of five *Yamas* which is mentioned under *Raksha vidhan* in *Vrana Chikitsa* of *Sushrut Chikitsa Sthan*<sup>(10)</sup>.
- *Acharya Charak* has mentioned *Brahmacharya* in *Aachar Rasayan*. The person who follows *Brahmacharya* he doesn't need to get any other *Rasayan* externally because he gets benefits of *Rasayan Karma* by following *Brahmacharya*<sup>(11)</sup>.

### **Attributes of Brahmacharya:**

In *Vaidyakiya Subhashit Sahityam*, *Brahmacharya* classified into 1) *Naishthik Brahmacharya* & 2) *Vaivahika Brahmacharya*. Also classified as *Ashtang Brahmacharya*.

*Naishthika Brahmacharya* – It can be defined as controlled & regulated activities of *Sharir*, *Mana* & *Vak* (speech) throughout the life since birth till end of life<sup>(12)</sup>.

*Vaivahika Brahmacharya* – The person who even in *gruhastha* follows the disciplines, rules for the intention of *Pitru Runa Mukti*<sup>(13)</sup>.

*Ashtang Brahmacharya* – It is controlled & regulated activities of *Shrotradi* & *Mana*

while they come in contact with their *Arthas* like *Shabdadi* <sup>(14)</sup>.

In *Yadnya Valkya Smriti* eight types of *Maithuna Karma* has been explained which are as follows: 1. *Smarana* (Memorising of female by male & vice versa) 2. *Kirtan* (Talking about each other's qualities) 3. *Keli* (to indulge in play) 4. *Prekshan* (looking with sexual urge) 5. *Guhyabhashan* (Talking in lonely place) 6. *Sankalpa* (To prepare for coitus) 7. *Adhyavasaya* (To attempt or effort) 8. *Kriya* (Coitus or Sexual intercourse). Only sexual intercourse is not defined as *Maithuna*. These all are considered as *Maithuna*. So, to control all these is defined as *Brahmacharya* <sup>(15)</sup>.

#### **Abrahmacharya –**

*Acharya Vagbhat* has mentioned *Abrahmacharya* while *Acharya Charak* has mentioned *Brahmacharya*. *Brahmacharya* & *Abrahmacharya* stands for same. The only difference is *Abrahmacharya* is practicing tactfully & disciplined *Maithuna Karma* in *Gruhasthashram* according to *Acharya Vagbhat* <sup>(16)</sup>. *Gruhasthashram* is only phase of life in which controlled & disciplined *Maithuna Karma* is advised. In *Ashtang Hriday*, it is advised for both men & women that a male should not indulge in sexual intercourse with a female who is not free from bleeding phase of menstrual cycle, who is not wishing for sexual intercourse, whose behaviour is not favourable, who is free from sexually transmitted diseases, who is very skinny or obese, who is recently delivered a baby (Postpartum period) or who is pregnant or who is not your wife or who is from other religion or caste & vice versa (whichever is applicable for males) <sup>(17)</sup>.

It is also advised that *Maithuna Karma* should not be done at *Guru's* place like Gurukul, Holy places like temples, Respected places like heritage, Places of *Hawan*, Burial sites, Places near river etc. It is also advised that *Maithuna Karma* should

be avoided on day of *Sankranti*, Solar or Lunar eclipse day, A full moon day (*Pournima*) or No moon day (*Amavasya*) <sup>(18)</sup>.

It is mentioned that a person who had taken excess of food, who is in anxiety, who is hungry, who is not in proper position, who is thirsty, who is not adult yet or who is in old age, who is in urge of passing urine or stool should not indulge in *Maithuna Karma* <sup>(19)</sup>.

It is advised that a person (male or female) who had taken medicines to improve virility (*Vajikaran*) should practice *Maithuna Karma* According to wish in Winter Season i. e. *Hemant* or *Shishir Ritu*, with gap of 3 days in *Vasant* (Spring) & *Sharad* (Autumn) *Ritu* & with gap of 15 days in *Grishma* (summer) & *Varsha* (Rainy) seasons <sup>(20)</sup>.

It is also advised that after *Maithuna Karma* a person should take bath & clean sexual organs properly. A person should anoint with *Chandan*, *Kasturi Lepa* & should take milk, sweets, soup in diet according to season <sup>(21)</sup>.

#### **DISCUSSION**

##### **Importance of Trayoupastambha:**

*Acharya Charak* has mentioned *Aahar* (Proper food), *Nidra* (Proper sleep) & *Brahmacharya* as *Trayoupastambha*. These 3 are sub pillars which holds life if all of these three are in proper manner. In detail if we see *Acharya Charak* has considered *Tridanda* as main *Stambha* (pillars) of life. These are *Satwa*, *Aatma* & *Sharir*. These three supports life & *Trayoupastambha* supports these *Tridanda* to protect *Ayu* (life). It's very important that each of these three *Aahar*, *Nidra* & *Brahmacharya* should be maintained properly. Any one of *Upastambha* if not maintained properly eventually its imbalances other two *Upastambha* even if they are maintained properly. Hence each *Upastambha* should be in regulated manner to achieve healthy life. In regulated maintenance of

*Trayoupastambha* it should be done through *Yukti* i.e., through proper management.

***Brahmacharya & Maithuna Karma:***

*Brahmacharya* is not always abstinence from *Maithuna Karma*. *Brahmacharya* also means practicing *Maithuna Karma* in disciplined manner as mentioned in *Rutukal* & as mentioned in *Shatsra*. In *Rutucharya* we have references about practicing *Maithuna Karma* according to seasonal variations. As we have seen references regarding to do & not to do while practicing *Maithuna Karma*. So, practicing *Brahmacharya* means completely avoiding *Maithuna Karma* is myth. At the same time, we should have controlled activities of our *Indriya* (sensory organs).

***Brahmacharya & Rasayan Karma:***

*Shukra Dhatu* is made from essence of *Aahar*. *Shukra dhatu* is responsible for strength, complexion of body & *Oja* which ultimately gives *Deerghayu* (long life), *Aarogya*(health), *Smriti* (memorising power), *Prabha* (Lustre), *Varna* (Complexion), *Sharir Bala* (strength to body), *Indriya Bala* (strength to sensory organs). These all are benefits of *Rasayan Karma*. *Brahmacharya* helps in conservation of *Shukra Dhatu*. So eventually *Brahmacharya* gives benefits of *Rasayan Karma*. In *Achar Rasayan Acharya Charak* has mentioned about *Brahmacharya*.

**Conclusion:**

*Trayoupastambha* is a tool to achieve *Trividha Eshanas* of life. *Trayo - upastambha* helps to keep life in healthy status. Many diseases are caused due to improper management of *Trayoupastambha*. Hence *Brahmacharya* is responsible for healthy life. *Brahmacharya* is nothing but regulated activities of *Indriya* throughout the life & disciplined practice of *Maithuna Karma* in *Gruhashthashram* with intention of *Pitru Runa Mukti*. So, considering all above discussions we can conclude that *Brahmacharya* is way of healthy living.

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