

Practical Applicability of Nyayas – Maxims in Ayurveda

Abstract

Maxim signifies a moralistic aphorism which pertains to a philosophical principle. In Sanskrit, maxim is recognized under the realm of Nyaya. It is basically seen by the general public as a more logical proposition. Nyaya enfeebles a host of classical Sanskrit ideologies in a greater detail. During course of development of Sanskrit literature most of texts in Classical Sanskrit seem to have consisted of maxims in variegated circumstances. Ayurveda being the *Upaveda* of *Atharva Veda* and having the background of philosophy, also depict many of the *Nyayas* to express its concepts and principles.

Key words: Nyaya, Maxims, Veda, Ayurveda

Introduction

Maxim signifies a didactic statement which pertains to any dogma or philosophy in a context. In Sanskrit, maxim is recognized under the term of *Nyaya* which captures a situation in life, usually with a nugget of words. A *Nyaya* or maxim is defined as “an expression of general truth or principle”. It is basically seen by the general public as a more logical proposition. They are specifically used when characterizing a situation. By the midst of Sanskrit development, most of texts in Classical Sanskrit seem to have consisted of maxims in variegated circumstances.

The genesis of this evolution was the influence of Rig-Veda and related Vedic books and post Vedic scriptures like *Puranas*, *Upanishads*, *Kavya*, *Nataka*, *Darshanas* and so on. *Ayurveda*, being the *Upaveda* of *Atharvaveda*, also explains various maxims to enlighten their treatise and for the easy understanding of the topics. As these maxims are commonly used by the people, Ayurvedacharys found it as an easy tool for the clarification of the views what they want to put forth in their lexicon. Later the commentators of these lexicons integrated a number of *Nyayas* to explore the exact meaning of the actual verses.

The *Nyayas* are of two types 1) *Loukika Nyaya* 2) *Shastriya Nyaya*. *Loukika Nyayas* are the one which are used by the common public in day today life where as *Shastriya Nyayas* are the one which are used by the authors of the treatise to explore their concepts. Most commonly by using the meaning and gist of *Loukika Nyaya*, the *Shastriya Nyayas* were put forth by the *Granthakaras*. The *Nyayas* like *Dandapooa Nyaya*, *Munjadisheekodharana Nyaya*, *Simhavalokana Nyaya*, *Sthalipulaka Nyaya*, *Shakhachandra Nyaya*, *Kupamanduka Nyaya* etc are commonly used in literature as well as day to day life.^{1,2}

The purpose of *Nyaya* in *Veda*, *Upanishad*, *Darshana* or in *Sanskrit* is to beautify the literature but in *Ayurveda* their utilization is mainly to comprehend the concealed concepts easily, to resolve different diseases and to understand the treatment aspect.

Definition^{3,4,5,6}:

From various references, the *Nyaya* can be defined as a method or general rule or logical explanation or a principle through which various concepts are understood or explained.



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**Some important Nyayas in Ayurvedic Classics:
Pipeelika Bharaharana Nyaya⁷**

An ant even though having the small stature, can carry the things which are beyond its weight. Thus when a person does the work which is beyond his capacity this Nyaya is used. Acharya Charaka while explaining the Sara Pareeksha/examination of body constitute, used this Nyaya. To assess the Bala/strength of a person, explanation of eight Sara has been given. By seeing a stout body generally we will think he has good strength and by seeing a person with emaciation we think he is weak. But every time it is not true. Stout person may be weak and person who is emaciated may have good strength just like an ant which is very small but can carry the things having more weight than it. The strength of a person depends mainly on his Sara or Satva. Thus a physician who wants to give an excellent treatment should properly assess the strength of the patient by considering his Sara, Satva and Bala not by seeing only his body. In this regard the verse ".....Purusham Purusham Veekshya Sa jneyo Bhishaguttamaha" suits for this Nyaya.

Shilaputrvat Nyaya⁸

By this Nyaya, we shall know the philosophical background in Ayurveda. While explaining the evolution theory, this Nyaya has been depicted. Ayurveda accepts the production of this universe begins with Avyakta which is having three basic qualities like Satva, Raja and Tama. From this Mahan is produced and then the Ahankara which is of three types. From these, eleven Indriyas (sense organs) and the five basic elements has been produced. All the later products too have three basic qualities, though named separately. When a big stone is made into small pieces, though the size differs from big to small, their quality will be the same. Similarly the Avyakta, Mahan etc though explained separately but basically produced out from similar things that is Trigunas/ three basic qualities. Thus we find a clear cut explanation of evolution theory in Ayurveda.

Na prushtva Guravo Vadanti Iti Nyaya

This Nyaya highlights the literary research carried out in Ayurveda. The meaning of this Nyaya is without asking the questions by the student, teacher will not describe anything. Ayurveda is based on Guru- Shishya Parampara only. All the fundamental treatises of Ayurveda are developed through this methodology itself where the students ask the question and the teachers gives the detail description for the same. Each chapter of the treatise starts with a question by the scholar and then the concerned explanation regarding that question is given by the teacher. For example, a chapter of Charaka Samhita Sharira Sthana starts with the question "Kathida Purusho Dhiman Dhatubhedena Bhidyate...." And so on. Later the detailed description of each question is given by the Guru Atreya Maharshi.⁷

In some of the chapters, though question is not mentioned at first, it is understood that there also the same methodology has been adopted. Thus the methodology of literary research is clear in Ayurveda.

Ambuja Vanasyarka Nyaya⁷

Yatha Ambujavanasyarkaha Pradeepo Veshmano Yatha |
Prabhodhana Prakasharthaha Tatha Tantrasya Yuktayaha ||

Here, Charakacharya explained the uses of Tantrayukti/method of understanding the treatise by giving an example of Ambujavana/ land of Lotus. Ambujavana blossom when the rays of sun fall on it. Similarly the hidden meanings of the Shastra/treatise can be explored with the help of Tantrayukti. In the same way like the lamp eradicates the darkness and gives light, Tantrayukti enlightens the knowledge by giving proper meaning of hidden matter.

Lotus withers during evening hours where as blossoms when sun rays fall on it. First the sun rays fall on it then it get blossom. Similarly first one has to accumulate some Punya/virtuous act then only its Phala/effect will be obtained, Clouds appear first then rain falls. Thus, for any effect to occur there must present a particular cause in sequence. Considering these examples, Charakacharya mentioned that for light in a home, lamp should be there; lotus to blossom, sun rays should be there; in the same way to know the hidden meaning of treatise, to understand the it clearly, to establish any concepts firmly, to defeat the Parapaksha/opponent etc Tantrayukti is very essential. Thus in each and every chapter of Charakasamhita, to explain his views clearly and to establish his concepts Charakacharya used various Tantrayuktis.

Kakataliya Nyaya⁹

When a crow sits on the fruit of Taala if it falls, then we say that due to crow it get fell. But actually it is an accidental process not by the crow. This is called Kakataliya Nyaya.

It can also be used when a Kuvaidya (bad physician) treats a patient and he gets good result. Here there is no role of that physician in treating the patient. Accidentally he got relief.

Similarly we can find some other reference regarding the same Nyaya. For example, a lady is not getting her menstrual cycle and has misinterpreted as pregnant. If she consumes the food articles having Ushna (hot), Tikshna (penetrating) etc properties excessively there may be the commencement of menstruation. But the illiterate consider that the Garbha/foetus is taken away by Bhoota/Bhootahruta Garbha/devil spirit.

Pinda – Brhmanda Nyaya

What is there in the universe same is present in the body. This Nyaya is the fundamental principle of Ayurveda by the name – Loka-Purusha Samya Siddhanta.⁷ In each and every place Ayurvedacharyas denoted this principle. Ayurveda accepts the Panchabhoutikatva of each and every object in this universe. This body is also made up of Panchabhutas only. Acharyas considered the earth/ Pruthvi for the gross body, water/Apa for the moisture of the body, flame/ Teja for the temperature of the body, Air/Vayu for the life/Prana of body and so on. The detailed explanation of the Pinda- Brahmanda Nyaya is seen in the Charaka Samhita Sutrassthana 12th chapter – Vatakalakaliya Adhyaya where Charakacharya described the aggravated and unprovoked/ normal functions of Sharirachara Vayu/in the body and Asharirachara Vayu/outside the body.

Discussion & Conclusion

We find usage of a lot of Nyaya – Maxims since from Vedic period continuing to later era. The purpose of these Nyayas in Veda, Purana, Kavya,

Nataka, Darshana and *Sanskrit* literature is to beautify their transcript but in *Ayurveda* they are used for clear understanding of the concepts. Understanding of these *Nyayas* is very essential for the *Ayurvedic* scholars for the better implementation of the concepts of *Ayurveda* practically. By reading the verses in the *Ayurvedic* texts we can get the superficial knowledge but the hidden information of those verses can be assessed by using various *Nyayas*. In the original texts of *Ayurveda* we find mentioning of some of the *Nyaya* but the commentators of these treatises used various maxims while writing their commentary for the clarification of the main verse in the text. Thus these *Nyayas* help in exploring the hidden concepts of *Ayurveda*, helps for understanding the diseases, its diagnosis methods, differential diagnosis, how and when the medicines are to be used etc. In total a thorough knowledge of these *Nyayas* mentioned in *Ayurveda* helps in various fields of researches like literary, clinical, drug and so on.

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