



## CONCEPT OF BUDDHI IN AYURVEDA: A REVIEW

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### ABSTRACT

The Darshanik concept of Buddhi has been mentioned in the classics due to their inevitability and their acceptability in that society. Inevitability, in the sense Ayurveda was also developed from the contemporary sciences of that era. In those times explanation regarding Buddhi and Mana were available only from these schools i.e. Darshanas, Upanishads. The Darshanik thoughts are almost same as those described above. Brihatrayees adapted Most of the thoughts of Samkhya and Vaisheshika as they are very much near to medical school of thoughts. Buddhi (Intellectual power of brain) is a powerful entity, which retains the specific knowledge or the essence of the texts gained by reading, listening or repeating it. It doesnot only retain the knowledge but time by time whenever needed it has the ability to recall the same. The article will discuss about concept of Buddhi explained in the classical texts.

**Keywords:** Buddhi, Darshanas, Intellectual power of brain, Upanishads

### INTRODUCTION

Charaka opines Buddhi as primary factor (Prakriti not Vikriti) of evolution. In the beginning of the texts Acharyas had taken only the spiritual aspect of Buddhi. So in these contexts they have narrated Buddhi for the description of Sargaprakriya and Pralaya. Buddhi is said to be Nitya and Prasavadharmini (can produce next evolutionary principle). Especially in Sharirasthana of Charaka all the facets of mind and emotions are stated as obstacles to the liberation and those who are capable of avoiding these normal emotions of a being are said to be intellect or intelligent<sup>1</sup>. On this philosophical point of view Acharya also tells that if one fails to get rid of these emotions of Raja and Tama he will be forced to take birth again and again. Probably this school of thought might have forced to say that aim of Ayurveda is salvation even though management of health and diseases are also of chief concern.

### Buddhi - The Intellectual aspect

While describing the pathogenesis of different diseases, treatments, Nidanapanchakas- all Acharyas are unique in considering the spiritual aspect of the Buddhi, Mana and even Atma in toto. This indicates the two aspects of our Shastra that it has an applicability and palatability in philosophy as well as in medicine. When analyzed Buddhi can be understood to be having following functions

### Decision making

The primary definition of Buddhi given in the classics indicates this meaning of decisive capacity<sup>2,3</sup>. This capacity mainly reveals the personality of man in normalcy. These definitions of Buddhi cover its two faculties i.e. Dhee and Dhriti. If one person is in healthy condition he can discriminate the good and bad and can decide what to do and what not to do. The personalities like Brahmya, Arsha are having this power in excess and their mode of living will also be ideal<sup>4</sup>. They are less prone to any disease due to their living style with good discrimination.

### Logical reasoning

Man is such a creature who makes logical reasoning for every perception. In Indian thought it is termed as Viveka Buddhi.

A look and thorough analysis reveals that this capacity of humans is carried out in two steps.

- Primary Vivechana at the level of Mana.
- Final Vivechana and Grahana at the level of Buddhi.

While describing the physiology of Mana it is said that after the perception of Indriyarth by Mana, it does the Uhapoha Vichara<sup>5</sup> and send to Buddhi for final Vivechana. This is the primary Vivechana at the level of Mana. Later these perceptions will be subjected for thorough analysis under the faculty of Buddhi for making a concrete idea regarding the perception. As far as the intellectual development of a child is concerned; educational psychologists explain this phenomenon in four important phases. They are sensation, perception, abstraction and generalization.

- Sensation and perception-Indriyabhigraha.
- Abstraction and generalization- Uhopoha vichara and Vastu vimarsha.

This can be explained by a simple example. Suppose a child is seeing a white horse at first instance (Indriyabhigraha) and is told that it is a horse. The child tries to form an image of the horse (Uhopoha vichara). In the beginning the image formed will be very specific in nature and will pertain to the perceived animal only. Later on; when he perceives a black or red horse he doesn't at once, call it a horse. He again makes an enquiry and thus comes to know that these two are horses. He compares the initial perceptions and mental images (working of the faculty of Buddhi i.e. Smriti) with the subsequent ones whereby similarities are accepted and differences (For example the color, size, etc.) are eliminated. Thus the child gradually creates a mental image leading to the idea of a horse in terms of the common attributes possessed by all horses. In other words, the child forms the concept of horse (Nischayatmika Buddhi).

### Types of Buddhi

Buddhi is constituted by trigunatmaka prakrti i.e. satwa, rajas and tamas. Srimad Bhagavad Gita describes three types of buddhi viz. Satva buddhi, rajasa buddhi and tamasa buddhi. In Caraka Samhita word prajna has been used which is

synonymous to buddhi. Prajna has been described to be of three types' dhi, dhrti and smrti<sup>6</sup>.

### Dhi

Chakrapani states that knowledge of an object is the sense of "as it is" i.e. "Yatharthanubhava" or perception of true knowledge is dhi.

### Dhrti

In Caraka sarira sthana it is said that dhrti is the controlling factor which prevents the manas from indulging in harmful and non-beneficial objects<sup>7</sup>. That is why the importance of association of dhrti with manas has been stressed under the function of manas in the context of 'swanigraha'. Dalhana has mentioned that control over the mind is possible only on the basis of retained experiences whether that object is useful or not<sup>8</sup>.

### Smrti

In Caraka vimana it is described that it can be examined by recollection of an object in manas i.e. smrti smaranena<sup>9</sup>. In Caraka sarira, it is defined as subject's ability to recall things. According to Dalhana, recalling the past experiences, regaining of past knowledge. In Caraka it has been accepted as one type of prajna or buddhi. Caraka has enumerated that remembrance of tatwa jnana is known as smrti and a person having smrti will not only be free from disease but will also get salvation. According to Cakrapani, uhapohavicara and smrti have been termed as buddhi<sup>10</sup>. So it is obvious that without smrti, the function of buddhi is incomplete. Function of buddhi cannot occur without uhapoha and vicara, which come through smrti or past experiences. According to Caraka sarira, when smrti occurs it will give rise to buddhi by uao and vicara. Due to smrti vibhrama, the buddhi of a person is not clear. If complete buddhinasa has not occurred buddhi is directed to akarya or akaryata, because the factor which is responsible for buddhi is impaired i.e. smrti vibhrama might have taken place. Dhi, dhrti and smrti are recognized as intrinsic dimensions of manas. The word manas when used in general sense refers to the 'Totality of knowing or doing' and indicates dhi, dhrti and smrti as well. Manas is a specific term which refers only to its initial contact with the visaya (object). In other words 'perception' is the process of doing or knowing. In a given kriya (act) manas is called smrti at the level of recall, dhi at the level of control and dhrti in the moderation of the act throughout. Buddhi even though the characteristic of Atma is imposed to manas as it is manifested through manas and at the level of decision it is known as Buddhi<sup>11</sup>.

### The role of Indriyas in the manifestation Buddhi

The indriyas are basically of three types, Jnanendriya, Karmendriya, Ubhayendriya and in total 11 in number. They are as follows: The five Buddhindriyas are the organs of perception, the eye, the tongue, the nose, the ear and the skin. Each sensory organ grasps one quality of the environment. The five Karmendriyās are the organs of action, namely, speech, hands (manipulation), feet (movement), the organs of excretion and sex organs. The Ubhayendriya is the Manas which act on both the above mentioned Indriyas. They either carry information (Jnanendriya) or manifest the action (Karmendria) depending on the commands of the Ubhayendriya.

### The role of Indriyarthas in the manifestation Buddhi

Here an elaborate meaning of Indriyartha is necessary instead of just restricting to physical stimuli. Since Manas does both Indria Sapeksha Karma as well as the Indriya Nirapeksha Karma the sensations or stimulations that are non-physical in nature also need to be taken as an Indriyartha. It is only after this consideration that the concept of intelligence and Buddhi can be complete.

### Place and function of Buddhi

Which mean that the Buddhi comes into action after the work of Manas. The Dhrti Controls the mind from the various vikaras and temptation of harmful objects, Smrti brings in the previous experiences or the related information to help Dhi and then Dhi has a prime role in deciding out of the categorized data from Manas. Buddhi also forms the information for the production of action. That is the out come is either in the form of Vaktum (Speech) or Kartum (Work)<sup>12,13</sup>.

### Events occurring in production of Buddhi

The Indriyarthas (Physical or Nonphysical) are perceived through the Indriyas (Physical through the Jnanendriyas and Non physical through the Manas directly) and stimulate them then the information is processed in Manas. The information immaterial of whether it is Indriya Sapeksha or Indria nirapeksha under goes Chintya, Vicharya, Uhya, Dheya. At this level Sankalpa sorts out the data into Guna yukta, Dosha yukta or Anyata. This categorized Data is given to Buddhi. With the help of Dhrti and Smrti the Dhi takes the Nischaya as to what is to be chosen. And later the action is manifested as Vaktum or Kartum. These events of Buddhi may differ in time of action, method adapted for action etc depending on the Individual capacities like a Pitta Prakriti person may do it in a better way compared to others as they have a good intellectual power. Since Prakriti is one of the considerations here, the performance can also differ with due considerations to Kula, Desha, Kala, Vaya, Pratyatma niyata<sup>14</sup> etc.

### Assessment of Buddhi

In Ayurveda very crude references are available regarding the assessment of Buddhi with its three functional aspects Dhee, Dhrti and Smriti. The methodology applied by Acharyas for this purpose was Anumana Pramana as Buddhi is an abstract one. The objects of testing Buddhi during that period was to select ideal scholars for the science, to test any pathological affliction to Buddhi and for judgment of a person's intellectual out put. Proper Buddhi is an inevitable tool for unbiased usage of Anumana Pramana. He has used many times this Anumana Pramana during Roga- Rogee Pariksha and prescription of therapy. But there was no specific test like "IQ" battery which is used now days. On compiling different scattered references it can be concluded that Acharyas tested following areas of Buddhi for the intellectual assessment<sup>15</sup>.

- Testing of Vijnana (Vijnanam vyavasayena).
- Testing of Raja (Rajah sangena).
- Testing of Moha (Moham avijnanena).
- Testing of Virya (Viryam Utthanena).
- Testing of Smriti (Smritim smaranena).
- Testing of Shraddha (Shraddhamabhiprayena).
- Testing of Medha (Medham grahanena).

### **Testing of Vijnana (Vijnanam Vyavasayena)**

Here the subject is instructed to do some job and kept under observation. The assessment is done by looking how perfect the work has been accomplished. The example for this is a performance test like Seguin Form Board tests where the child's performance is noted and interpreted thus helps in assessment of Vijnana.

### **Testing of Raja (Rajah Sangena)**

The inherent qualities of raja are self-esteem, anger, ego and competitive spirit. These qualities are residing in each and every person in variable magnitude. But according to different situations an intelligent man regulates these Gunas for the betterment of him as well as society. This regulation or modification capacity is known as Viveka buddhi, which is residing only in human being. Sanga is one such innate and developed affinity towards an object or a thing. In ancient times it was tested by looking to one's affinity towards opposite sex, food articles etc.

### **Testing of Moha (Moham Avijnanena)**

Till date there are no tests in the world for knowing the magnitude of ignorance of a human being. Here Acharyas tried to know how ignorant one man is. In clinical parlance the word Moha indicates the level of impairment to the consciousness. It is a stage of confusion and stupor. In this stage man has an altered perception or is unable to perceive the sensations. A higher stimulus is needed to evoke the sensation.

### **Testing of Virya (Viryam Utthanena)**

This is the testing of courage in literary meaning. But this is the test of the modality and amount of motivation with which one does the activities in day-to-day life. Even though the path to the destination may be highly difficult, if good motivation is with in him, one will do the work with full dedication and without any hesitation<sup>16</sup>. This motivation can be very well understood from the very beginning of the work and it is normally present in every human being<sup>17</sup>. The term 'motivation' needs special narration in the parlance of scholastic skill of a child. The basic cause of all human activities is nothing but motivation. According to Guilford, "A motive is particular internal factor or condition that tends to initiate and to sustain activity". This definition goes hand in hand with Chakrapani's definition for Utthana (Utthana kriyarambha). The term Prerana can be correlated with the motivation<sup>18</sup>. It arouses<sup>19</sup>, directs and determines<sup>20</sup> the intensity of learning effort. Prerana is the cause for the first initiative to every action<sup>21</sup>. In the absence of motivation there will be either no learning or very little learning and the learned activity shall be forgotten very soon. This quality is very well observed in Yamya Satw. Acharya Gangadhara tells that when Vayu functions properly at the time of embryogenesis on Atmaja Bhava inheritance of proper Prerana for the Cheshta is happening<sup>22</sup>. It is the duty of an ideal teacher to motivate a student for acquiring vast knowledge as per Charaka Samhita<sup>23</sup>.

### **Testing of Smriti (Smritim Smaranena)**

In the examination of memory, Acharyas used the methodology of direct interrogation. Showing something and asking the past experience regarding that matter will reveal the efficacy of memory. Usually the test was carried out by chanting different Shashtra sloka. From this it can be

concluded that how much one can restore and recollect a matter. A variety of quantitative methods are available to assess memory functions in neurological and psychiatric patients. Quantitative methods are useful for evaluating and following patients longitudinally as well as for carrying out a one-time examination to determine the status of memory function. If a memory problem is detected, it should be determined whether memory is selectively affected or whether memory problems are occurring against a background of intellectual deficits, as occurs in dementia. Although some widely available tests, such as the Wechsler Memory Scale-Revised, are useful measures of memory, most single tests assess memory rather narrowly, and even general-purpose neuropsychological batteries provide only limited testing of memory functions. A complete assessment of memory usually involves a number of specialized tests that aim at intellectual functions, new learning capacity, remote memory, and memory self-report.

### **Testing of Shraddha (Shraddham Abhiprayena)**

Here the word Shraddha indicates one's longings. This is tested by assessing one's opinion regarding one subject. According to one's 'aptitude' he or she will respond to a question regarding a matter. This opinion is also according to one's will. The Iccha itself owns another meaning in psychiatric parlance i.e. nothing but greed<sup>24,25</sup>. Shraddha is one of the Atma Guna (inherent quality). Shraddha can be developed deliberately only up to some extent; Shraddha (Aptitude) either developing or getting rudimentary according to the different circumstances of one's living<sup>26</sup>. An aptitude is said to be a condition of a quality in an individual, which shows the possibility of future success in a field, under proper training. Today there are variable Aptitude tests available through which one can analyses this factor.

### **Testing of Medha (Medham Grahanena)**

In olden days this was tested by how much one can understand a given test or knowledge<sup>27</sup>. If one can understand the things easily he will be designated as Dheeman<sup>28,29</sup>. Acharyas attributed this capacity to the functions of Pitta<sup>30</sup> and it is a quality of Satwika personality<sup>31</sup>. Other examinations, which have been explained above, come under this examination. Thus various ways of testing Buddhi have been explained in classics, and the tests available today might have derived their bases on the same.

## **Understanding the different levels of intelligence in Ayurveda**

### **Jada or Mandabuddhitwa**

Atiyoga, mithyayoga and heenayoga of any entities such as kala, Buddhi, indriyarthas can produce the disease Mandabuddhitwa which is indicated by impaired perception, retention and recollection of the knowledge. Charaka has included Mana along with kala, Buddhi and indriyarthas for producing Manda Buddhi in connection with Atiyoga, Mitya yoga and Heena yoga<sup>32</sup>. In Jadata also, there is poor genesis of knowledge due to hypo-function (Heena Yoga) of Mana and Buddhi with its sub component Dhee, Dhriti and Smriti. For genesis of knowledge Atma, Indriya, Mana, Buddhi all play an important role. But there are some other factors like Pranavayu, Udanavayu, Sadhakapitta, Alochakapitta and oja which helps in the process of knowledge production. All the above entities are seated in Hridaya. The hypo-function of these entities can initiate the hypo-function of Buddhi.

### Pathogenesis of Jada and Mandabuddhitwa

Deeds of past life and predominance of Triguna (Satwa, Raja and Tama) during the time of fertilization have impact on the Buddhi as Manas and Buddhi are derived from Atmaja and Sattvajabhava. Higher concentration of Tamo Guna due to previous birth deeds either during fertilization or afterwards results in hypofunctioning of the Buddhi and born child becomes mentally deficient since or after birth. The birth idiocy also may be due to the abnormality in Beeja, Beejabhaga, Beejabhagavayava especially that part of Beeja, which is representing the Buddhi<sup>33</sup>. In the antenatal period various etiological factors are described such as dishonored longing of a pregnant woman, excessive consumption of vata vardhka ahara and madya sevana provoke vata Dosha. This provoked vata both directly reaches the fetal heart through the nabhinadi (umbilical cord) and form the Avarana i.e., pranavrita samana resulting into Jadata, or aggravated vata vitiating and mixing up with kapha reaches the foetal heart through the Nabhinadi<sup>34</sup>. There is predominance of Kapha in childhood and the hridaya is seat of kapha so that higher accumulation of kapha in the heart obstructs the function of the entities which are situated in the Hridaya such as Manas, Buddhi, Pranavayu, Udanavayu, Sadhaka pitta, Alochaka pitta and Ojas<sup>35-37</sup>. Kapha by itself is dominated by Tamobhava. The hypo-functioning of all the entities and higher concentration of Tamo guna can manifest into the hypo-functioning of the Buddhi. Siras being a marma and also the seat of Indriyas during the delivery, if there is any trauma (Abhigata) on the head; it may affect the Indriya leading to hypo-functioning of the Buddhi<sup>38</sup>. In the postnatal period, feeding of Kapha dushta stanya in a child provokes the kapha Dosha and this aggravated kapha creates a change in the Manovaha srotas i.e., Hridaya which is the seat of Buddhi and its functional units. It results into the impaired genesis of knowledge causing Jada or Mandabuddhitwa in a child<sup>39</sup>. As pathological condition of Medha is not found anywhere in the texts of Ayurveda, whatever factors responsible for pathogenesis of Buddhimandya or Jadata can be accepted in cases of any disease condition of Medha dusti as both are of similar characters.

### CONCLUSION

Ayurveda believes Mana is the integral part of the life, which influence the overall health of the person. As increase incidence of psychosomatic diseases in the modern world due to stress, disturbed emotions etc, where Dhee, Dhriti and Buddhi of person is affected, which require non-pharmacological treatment. So consider Buddhi and its faculties in understanding and management of disease is must for Ayurvedic physician.


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