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An approach to *Manasa Pareeksha*

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ABSTRACT

Because of its nature, the mind is hard to grasp and almost impossible to control. It has the nature and movements of its own. Based on these facts, one can say that there is nothing more difficult to control than the mind. Thus understanding and assessing *Manas* (mind) is a difficult process involving many aspects. The present article highlights different approaches to *Manasa Pareeksha*, through *Dashavidha Pareeksha*, *Anumana*, through physiology of perception, and the *Manasa Prakruti*, etc. The *Manas* can also be accessed through the 12 factors mentioned in *Bhagvatgeeta*. The idea is to have different options in *Manasa Pareeksha* and to implement whichever type is needed to assess the condition of *Manas* in question.

Key words: *Manas, Mind, Manasa Pareeksha.*

INTRODUCTION

The power of perception of stimulus though resides in *Indriyas*, but *Manas* is the one which receives the information. *Manas* is responsible for presence and absence of knowledge. The category of objects of mind (*Chintya*, *Vicharya*, etc.) and its functions give *Manas* a lot of power and control over *Indriyas* and body. One of the functions of mind is to have control over itself. When this control hampers, the mind starts getting affected by its own objects and loses control over its functions as well as itself. In such a state, it is very difficult to get an idea about true condition of mind. Hence, *Manasa Pareeksha* holds an important place.

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Manas and its activities

Man is considered to be a complex living being. This complexity is because of his mind, thus making mind a powerful tool, which is difficult to control. The controlled mind leads to peacefulness while uncontrolled mind leads to mental and physical agitations. Our life is a constant struggle to learn controlling the mind, inability to do so cause sorrow and thus disease.

To understand and assess the mind properly, its objects and activities have to be enlisted, based on which one can proceed for *Manasa Pareeksha*. Mind's objects are the topics in which the mind is interested, they are^[1]

Chintyam Vichaaryamuhyam Cha Sankalpameva Cha I

Yat Kinchinmanaso Jneyam Tat Sarvam Hi Artha Sanjnyakam II

Indriyaabhighraha Karma Manasah Swasya Nigraha I

Uho Vicharascha, Tatah Param Pravartate II

Chintya (assessment of matters), *Vicharya* (consideration), *Uhya* (speculation), *Dhyeya* (aim), *Sankalpya* (determination). The functions of mind are *Indriabhighraha* (control of sense organs), *Swasyanigraha* (Self-restraint), *Uha* (forming hypothesis) and *Vichara* (thinking, considering). With

all these qualities, mind's physiology acts in these following steps.^[2]

Indriyena Indriyaartha Hi Samanaskena Gruhyate I

Kalpyate Manaso Turdhvam Gunato Doshato Athava II

Jayate Vishaya Tatra Ya Budhdhirmishchayatmika I

Vyavasyati Tatha Kartum Va Budhhi Purvakam II

1. Perception (*Indriya* receives *Artha*)
2. Analysing and determination (*Chintya*, *Vicharya*, *Uhya*, etc)
3. Stimulation or initiation (*Manas* gives instructions to *Karmendriyas*)

The seat of *Manas* is difficult to determine as it is constantly active and *Chanchala*.^[3] *Acharyas* indicate that the seat of *Manas* to be '*Hrudaya*' as well as '*Shira*', and in some places, '*Sarvashareera*', hence the *Srotases* of *Manas* are said to be *Sarvashareeragata*.

Satwadinam Kevalam Chetanavachchreeram

Ayanabhootam Adhisthtaananabhootam Cha |^[4]

Apart from all these, the *Prakrutis* of *Manas* (Psychosomatic constitutions) also play a major role in determining the susceptibility to a disease.

Manasa Pareeksha

Ayurvedic scriptures have mentioned that *Raja* and *Tama* to be the chief factors responsible for pathogenicity at the level of mind^[5] and it results into various forms of signs and symptoms along with fully established mental disorders.

Rajastamascha Maanasau Doshau I

Tayorvikarah Kamakrodhalobhamohershamanamada

Shoka Chittodvega Bhaya Harshadayah I

To assess the level of impairment in these *Doshas*, *Manas* has to be subjected to various examinations. Some of those are as below;

Dashavidha Pareeksha

The existence of *Manas* though is considered separate from the body, but both are said to influence each other. Hence, '*Dashavidha Pareeksha*' can be taken as a basic examination of body as well as mind and '*Satwa Pareeksha*' as a specific examination of mind.

Satwapareeksha includes categorising the patient/person in to three categories as *Pravara*, *Madhyama* and *Avarasatwa*, based on the strength of mind of that person.

Individuals having *Pravarasatwa* are possessed with the qualities of *Satwa Sara Purusha*,^[6] like Good memory, Devotion, Gratefulness, Wisdom, Purity, Excessive enthusiasm, Skill, Courage, Valour in fighting, Free from sorrow, Proper gait, Depth of wisdom, Intelligence, Sincerity in actions, Virtuous acts.

Pravarasatwa person's tolerance level is considered to be very high.

Individuals of *Madhyamasatwa*, need to be initiated by others. Their tolerance capacity is medium.

Avarasatwa individuals are always confused and unable to come to a decision. Their tolerance capacity is very low.

Satwa sarata can also be adopted as a tool for assessing mental strength.

Pareeksha through Anumana

It is explained that the things which are difficult to understand by direct perception should be inferred, Hence the *Anumana Pareeksha* is needed for examining the mind. The following are few things which can be inferred through *Anumana*.^[7]

Ime Tu Khalvanyeapyevam Eva Bhuyoanumaana Jneya Bhavanti Bhavah I

Tdyatha Manarthavyabhicharanena, Vijnyanam Vyavasayena.....II

- *Vidnyana*: The knowledge of a person about a thing is inferred based on its usage in activities.
- *Rajas*: Through obstruction in activities.
- *Moha*: By inability to perceive properly.
- *Krodha*: By person's activities to hurt others.
- *Shoka*: By seeing *Dainyabhava* (gremised look)
- *Harsha*: Through involvement in pleasant activities.
- *Preeti*: Through pleasant look.

- *Bhayam*: Through *Vishada* or sorrow.
- *Dhairya*: Through absence of *Vishada*.
- *Avasthana*: Stability of mind and absence of distractions
- *Shraddha*: Through opinions.
- *Medha*: Intellect, through grasping power.
- *Smruti*: Through the power to recall.
- *Dweshha*: By avoiding the thing of hatred.
- *Dhruti*: through alauya (confusions, conflicts)
- *Vashyata*: By obedience.

Pareeksha through the three steps of perception

But most importantly, the pure state of mind (*Amalastwa*) can be inferred by proper functioning of mind.^[8] As the *Lakshna* of *Manas* itself is perception and non-perception of knowledge.

Lakshanam Manaso Jnanasyaabhaavo bhava eva cha |^[9]

Amalam Satvam Avikarena^[10]

The '*Amalastwa*' will not alter in executing its three step physiology.

Thus the assessment of mal-perception should be carried out in these three steps itself.

1. Perception (*Indriya* receives *Artha*) - In this step, if perception is not occurring even if *Indriya* is in proper condition, then the problem can be attributed to this link of *Manas*. This mal-perception can be categorised in two forms depending on the severity of the *Doshas*, as - Illusions and hallucinations. Illusions occur when mind has a false perception, and Hallucination is an imaginary perception.
2. Analysing and determination (*Chintya*, *Vicharya*, *Uhya*, etc) - If *Manas* is influenced by *Rajas* and *Tamas*, this step will be deceived and the *Manas* will not function properly. These factors involve the emotions and can give rise to different phobias and psychosocial illnesses.
3. Stimulation or initiation (*Manas* gives instructions to *Karmendriyas*) - if there is obstruction in

executing the instructions to *Indriyas*, it may be due to the *Raja - Tamaavarana* at this point. These can be seen as diminished and exaggerated activities of *Karmendriyas*.

One has to consider the involvement of both *Tamas* and *Rajas* as *Tamas* alone will never act. *Rajas* is the activator.

Manasa Prakruti

Prakruti is a group of characters inherited by an individual. The concept of *Prakruti* has two dimensions; one is *Shareera* and the other *Manasika*. They both manifest from the same *Gunas* and are mutually acting to one another. The *Manasika Prakrutis* are explained on the bases of *Bhakti*, *Sheela*, *Cheshta*, *Saucha*, *Dweshha*, *Krodha*, *Achara*, *Jnyana*, *Moha*, *Buddhi*, etc.

On the bases of *Triguna* these are of three types, *Satwika*, *Rajasika* and *Tamasika*. These are again sub-classified in to 7, 6, and 3 types respectively.

Some regard these types of *Manasa Prakrutis* as different stages of life, from *Vanaspatya* to *Brahmasatwa*. At birth the baby is just like a *Vanaspati* and while growing, might assume different *Satwas* and the life might end in any of the stage of *Satwa*. Hence *Manasa Prakrutis* change according to the stage of development, but *Doshic Prakrutis* do not.

The *Manasika Prakruti* is also associated with *Nidra*, *Swapna*, etc. factors of a person. Thus, assessment of *Manasika Prakruti* holds an important place in *Manasa Pareeksha*.

Pareeksha through 12 factors of Bhagwat Geeta

In 17th and 18th chapter of *Bhagwat Geeta*, the following twelve factors are mentioned through which *Manas* can be assessed;

1. *Shraddha*
2. *Ahara*,
3. *Yajnya*,
4. *Tapas*,
5. *Dana*,

6. *Tyaga*,
7. *Gnyana*,
8. *Karma*,
9. *Kartha*,
10. *Buddhi*,
11. *Dhruti*,
12. *Sukha*.

Each of the above mentioned factors should be understood according to three *Gunas*, viz., *Satwika*, *Rajasa* and *Tamasa*.

For example, '*Shraddha*' (Respect)

Satvika person will respect elders and wise men, and will be ready to sacrifice for the purpose of society's happiness. The *Rajasika* person will sacrifice to gain respect and security for themselves, Where as *Tamasika* persons will not sacrifice them-selves but will try to gain respect by worshipping evil. In this way each of the 12 factors should be implemented according to three *Gunas*.

CONCLUSION

Manas is the one which controls itself as well as many other things. The impairment of which can lead to wide range of consequences. *Acharyas* have stated some *Pareekshas* of *Manas* in particular and have mentioned some as mere indications, leaving the examiner the power to modify and implement them. The information on *Manas* explained in other *Shastra* (Bhagvat Geeta, etc.) can also be included for its *Pareeksha*.

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