



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 7 · Issue 2

March 2022

Journal of  
**Ayurveda and Integrated  
Medical Sciences**

*www.jaims.in*

JAIMS

An International Journal for Researches in Ayurveda and Allied Sciences



**Maharshi Charaka**  
Ayurveda

Indexed

# Research in Ayurveda needed? A Samhita based debate

Arundhathi Krishnan<sup>1</sup>, Anand Katti<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Post Graduate Scholar, Dept. of P.G studies in Shalaky Tantra, Govt. Ayurveda Medical College, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India.

<sup>2</sup>Associate Professor & HOD, Dept. of Mouluka & Siddhantha, Govt. Ayurveda Medical College, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India.

## ABSTRACT

Today, the most talked about topic in Ayurveda system of medicine is the Research and its need, scope and utility. There is a lot of scope of research in Ayurveda including the fundamental, literary, clinical and the therapeutics. Keeping the Ayurveda fundamentals intact, it is mandatory and obligatory to pursue scientific research in this probably the oldest system of medicine. In spite of these many advantages the scholars of Ayurveda even today face this dichotomy of Yes or No when it comes to scope of research in Ayurveda. There are still scholars who opine that Ayurveda is a complete science and no addition to this is possible. The ground for their arguments are textual references available in Ayurveda Samhitas. Therefore, a debate is narrated in written form, analyzing the direct and indirect references available in Samhitas is presented.

**Key words:** Research, Ayurveda, Vada, Poorvapaksha, Uttarakpaksha

## INTRODUCTION

Necessity is the mother of invention. This quest of search something new or reinvent the known that is for the betterment of mankind is termed as Research. The research phenomenon is not new to the *Ayurveda* science of life. The Research has been as old as the human tradition. The *Ayurveda* classical texts are full of the direct and indirect references suggesting of research activity. The words synonymous with the research in *Ayurveda* classics are *Anusandhana*, *Anveshana*, *Gaveshana*, *Pariksha et al.*<sup>[1]</sup> These words

synonymous with the research in *Ayurveda* classics are *Anusandhana*, *Anveshana*, *Gaveshana*, *Pariksha et al.*<sup>[1]</sup> These words in the ancient Indian Sanskrit literature are of great significance as they denote the proximity of the research activity and the society.

For example, the *Charaka Samhita* having 120 chapters, was completed by Dridhabala. The methodology adopted by the *Dridhabala* is the *Sheela* (Collective) and the *Unchh* (Selective) methodology i.e., Collecting references from various *Tantra*, like how collecting stones from various parts and keep it together. These collective and selective methodologies are truly in scientific terms and used in the contemporary era as well. Therefore, the formation of these classical texts set an example of literary research themselves. Other than this below are some more reasons which emphasize the scope of research in *Ayurveda*.

- To formulate new combination of drugs or to check the efficacy of *Ayurveda* drugs in different disease conditions and to verify the efficacy of drugs by modern technology and proved parameters research is imminent.

### Address for correspondence:

Dr. Arundhathi Krishnan

Post Graduate Scholar, Dept. of P.G studies in Shalaky Tantra, Govt. Ayurveda Medical College, Bengaluru, Karnataka, India.

E-mail: arundhathik1994@gmail.com

Submission Date: 21/01/2022

Accepted Date: 25/02/2022

Access this article online

Quick Response Code



Website: [www.jaims.in](http://www.jaims.in)

Published by Maharshi Charaka  
Ayurveda Organization, Vijayapur,  
Karnataka (Regd) under the license  
CC-by-NC-SA

- For an integrated clinical trial based on both ancient ayurveda and current modern parameters, research is essential.
- To get experimental basis for textually obtained knowledge and the basic principles of *Ayurveda* like the *Dosha*, *Agni*, *Dushya* etc. remain unaltered and should be utilized for the search for the treatments. To validate old principles with new scientific technological proofs or to upgrade the old facts of *Ayurveda* to current space, time, and place.
- Research is to be done for assessment of safety, efficacy, toxicity levels of formulations, even though they have been tried and useful in the past, for the current standards, current rules and regulations of government to be explored, there comes the need to do safety study, efficacy studies, and toxicity level studies
- Application of improved research technology tools in *Ayurveda* in order to compete with the global market and expansion of *Ayurvedic* pharmacology is needed.
- Concepts so as to broaden the therapeutic application.
- To decode the secrets behind traditional treasures i.e., to decode in between the *Samhita* lines.
- To elucidate possible mode of action of drug by in vivo or invitro study. And to get evidence-based practise and to have an *Ayurveda* based evidence.
- To meet philosophy and science and to address new challenges in society

There is a lot of scope of research in *Ayurveda* including the fundamental, literary, clinical and the therapeutics. Keeping the *Ayurveda* fundamentals intact, it is mandatory and obligatory to pursue scientific research in this probably the oldest system of medicine.

In spite of these many advantages the scholars of *Ayurveda* even today face this dichotomy of Yes or No when it comes to scope of research in *Ayurveda*. There are still scholars who opine that *Ayurveda* is a complete science and no addition to this is possible. The ground

for their arguments are textual references available in *Ayurveda Samhitas*. Therefore, a debate is narrated in written form, analyzing the direct and indirect references available in *Samhitas* is presented.

### Vada (Debate)

Debate means an argument discussion with a point of proving oneself. Acharya Charaka defines as तत्र वादो नाम स यत् परेण सह शास्त्रपूर्वकं विगृह्य कथयति। Which means that in debate the argument should stand on scientific spirit. That is, it should be based on *Ayurveda* and *Ayurveda Samhita*. Debate is usually between two parties via, *Poorvapaksha* and *Uttarapaksha*. *Poorvapaksha* is first party and *Uttarapaksha* is second party. They can also be questioner and respondents.

**Poorvapaksha:** There has been a big debate amongst the *Ayurveda* fraternity regarding the need and utility of research in *Ayurveda*. Some of the staunch followers of the classical texts of *Ayurveda* affirm that there is no need of research in *Ayurveda* as the science of life, *Ayurveda* is a complete science promulgated by the seers of yore having the divine powers which make their deliberations beyond doubt. These seers of yore have envisioned *Ayurveda* through their spiritual resolve and have narrated the science for the posterity. The *Aptavakya* (authoritative statements) made by these seers should be practiced in its letter inspirit.

In *Ashtanga Hridaya* it is told that इदम् आगम सिद्धत्वात्प्रत्यक्ष फल दर्शनात् । मन्त्र वत्संप्रयोक्तव्यं नमीमांस्यं कथञ्चन॥ i.e., the text is to be followed without any doubt, without analysis (*Namimasya*) just like *Chanting Mantra*, because it is told by *Apta* (*Agama*) and is also the benefits are practically visible (*Pratyaksha Phala Darshana*).<sup>[2]</sup> This quotation is used as reference to show that there is no need of research in *Ayurveda*.

**Uttarapaksha:** Acharya Charaka quotes, प्रत्यक्षम् अल्पम् अनल्पम् अप्रत्यक्षम् । which means that domain of direct perception is limited and vast knowledge falls in the domain beyond perception which requires analysis and logical interpretation. Therefore, it is said परीक्ष्यकारिणो हि कुशला भवन्ति। Which means that one

who examines habitually and critically will become intellectually expert and practically skilled. Analysis, critical thinking, meticulous observation are hallmark of research.

**Poorvapaksha:** Acharya Sushruta while explaining the *Prabhava* of *Dravya* quotes सहस्रेणापि हेतूनां नाम्बद्धादि विरचयेत् | तस्मात्तिष्ठेत्तुमतिमानागमेनतुहेतुषु || that not everything can be visualized practically (*Prathyaksha*) some are in practice for long duration and its effect is undoubted and is considered as *Aagama* (*Aptopadesha*) so *Dalhana* asks isn't it *Viruddha* because we consider 4 *Pramana* and only *Aptopadesha* is important in this context?. To this he gives the answer as even *Aptopadesha* is based on *Prathyaksha* only. On visualizing whether the drugs are *Hita* or *Ahita* the effect of drug is told. The effect is told in *Shashtra* by considering it under *Pratyaksa*, *Anumana* etc. and then documented by *Apta*.<sup>[5]</sup>

Hence there is no need to ponder upon mode of *Virechana* action of *Ambashtadi Gana Dravya* and experts quote this as evidence to say that there is no scope of research in Ayurveda since it's already been experimented and practiced by *Acharyas*.

**Uttarapaksha:** In *Trisreshaneeya Adhyaya* Chakrapani have explained importance of *Pariksha* as परीक्षयते व्यवस्थाप्यते वस्तुस्वरूपमनयेति परीक्षा प्रमाणानि, आसोपदेशादय उत्तरग्रन्थे स्फुटा भविष्यन्ति | That is through *Pariksha* only the original or exact *Rupa* can be establish (*Vyavasthapayet*).<sup>[4]</sup> Since this statement also is *Apatavachana* this emphasize that there is need for *Pariksha* as a part of research. It is also to be remembered that *Apta Vachana* is also based on the observations. Those observations when approved by scientists and experts (*Shastranugraha*, *Lokanupavrutta*) will be known as *Aptopadesha*.

**Poorvapaksha:** In *Charaka Samhita* itself the qualities of *Apta* is mentioned as आत्ताः शिष्टाविबुद्धास्तेतेषां वाक्यमसंशयम् | सत्यं, वक्ष्यन्ति ते कस्मादसत्यं नीरजस्तमाः || i.e., *Aptas* are those who are devoid of any bonding, because of their *Tapa Bala* and *Jnana Bala* they are devoid of *Raja* and *Tapa*. Have *Trikala Jnana* i.e., knowledge of past, present and

future. *Amala Jnana* appropriate knowledge (*Yathartha Jnana*). *Avyahata Jnana* there is continuous flow of knowledge without break (*Akuntita*). Such *Apta* whatever says is *Shasana* i.e., accepted all over world (*Jagathkrtustna*). And is *Vibuddha* i.e., having special knowledge of all (*Vishesha Buddhi*). They won't lie because they are devoid of *Raja* and *Tama* (*Nirajaska*).<sup>[6]</sup>

Thus, the above verses from classics shows that there is no need of research in Ayurveda since the words of *Apta* is final and can practice Ayurveda without any doubt .

**Uttarapaksha:** where as in *Charaka Sidhisthana*, *Acharya* gives the importance of *Yukti* तस्मात् सत्यपि निर्देशे कुर्याद्दृष्ट्वा स्वयं धिया | विना तर्केण या सिद्धिर्यदृच्छसिद्धिरेव सा | i.e., *Arha* and *Anhra* told only for certain disease rest has to be understood by physician using his *Buddhi* by logically (taken) applying other references from *Shashtra*. If it is done without *Yukti* then it is *Yadruchha Siddhi* i.e., by luck he has got success in treatment.<sup>[7]</sup>

So, while coming to the treatment aspects its necessary to use our logical reasoning even though everything is already been explained in our classics by our acharyas, but should use the logical reasoning skills and researches for further advancement in Ayurveda.

**Poorvapaksha:** In *Dheerganjevitheeya Adhyaya*, compendiums approved by the great sages were established on (strong) footing for the welfare of the living.

तानि चानुमतान्येषां तन्त्राणि परमर्षिभिः | भ्र(भा)वाय भूतसङ्घानां प्र तिष्ठं भुविलेभिरे || Hence the need of research doesn't come in this science.

**Uttarapaksha:** While discussing about *vyadhi* सर्वथा सर्वमालोच्य यथासम्भवमर्थवित् | अथाध्यवस्येत्तत्त्वे च कार्यं च तदनन्तरम् | i.e., after analyzing *Vyadhi* from all the aspects we have to plan *Chikitsa* only if *Vyadhi* is *Sadhya* only, then implement *Chikitsa* so to get cure of disease. And this understanding is important when to stop *Chikitsa* or when to change the treatment for next

stage etc. This analytical skill can be developed more with new researches in ayurveda

An example quoted in *Vimanasthana*, न्यायोपपादितमुक्तं चार्थमुपसंहरन्नाह तस्मादित्यादि/ शास्त्रोपदेशे सत्यपि स्वबुद्धैवशास्त्रानुगतयाऽनुक्तमपि कर्तव्यं; यदुक्तं-“प्रचरणमिव भिक्षुकस्य बीजमिव कर्षकस्य सूत्रं बुद्धिमतामल्पमप्यनल्पज्ञानाय भवति” इति।<sup>[8]</sup> a beggar roams everywhere without guarantee of food and a farmer scatters seeds everywhere without guarantee that all will grow up similarly, though only in *Sutra* form it is told it doesn't mean it has *Alpa Jnana* but has *Analpa* i.e., extensive knowledge.

To explore the hidden secrets and principles in Ayurveda, we need to do research in order to utilize the available knowledge to the fullest in treatments.

**Poorvapaksha:** Intelligent person (physician) should not discuss the properties of drugs, अमीमाम्स्यान्यचिन्त्यानि प्रसिधानि स्वबावतः |आगमेनोपयोज्यानि भेशजानि विचक्षन्हे। since these are beyond our comprehension, well-known by their very nature of birth itself and are advocated by the scriptures. Thus, it shows there is no need of research on ayurveda.<sup>[9]</sup>

**Uttarapaksha:** While In *Charaka Samhita* in context of *Dashemani*, list of 10- 10 drugs has been told for *Alpa Buddhi* एहलमल्पबुद्धीनां व्यवहाराय, बुद्धिमतां च | स्वालक्षण्यानुमानयुक्तिकुशलानामनुक्तार्थज्ञानाये || i.e., For individuals of *Buddhi Mata*, they are capable to use similar *Lakshanayukta Dravya* can be used using *Yukti* of physician. Example quotes by *Chakrapani* as *Jeevaka*, *Vrushabhaka* etc. cause *Jivaniya* action because of *Madhurya*, *Snigda*, *Sheeta* and *Vrushyaguna* so we can use *Drakshapaya* and *Vidari* instead as they also share same property. Similarly, *Patasamanga* etc. which mitigates *Atisara* can be grouped to form separate *Dashemani* though not mentioned.<sup>[10]</sup>

Hence *Acharyas* indirectly tell us about the importance of using *Yukti* in *Chikitsa*. And thus whatever have

already told by *Acharyas* in classics need to be utilized for our daily practice with our *Yukti*.

Similarly in *Sushruta Samhita* there is a reference telling,

स्वबुद्ध्या चापि विभजेद्यन्त्रकर्माणि बुद्धिमान् असङ्ख्येय विकल्पत्वाच्छल्यानामिति निश्चयः || i.e., *Swabuddhi* has to be used in practice of *Shalyatantra* also because there are various *Vikalpa* (variations) based on shape of *Shalya* (shape) and based on that there are number of *Upakarma*.<sup>[11]</sup> Thus प्रज्जन्म चिकित्सार्थम् विशोदयेत् || i.e., research is necessary for improving therapeutic wisdom.

Thus all these references from classic tells about the need of research in *Ayurveda* प्रयोजनं चास्य स्वस्थस्य स्वास्थ्यरक्षणमातुरस्य विकारप्रशमनं च || The main *Prayogya* of *Ayurveda* as told in *Charaka Samhita* is for *Swasthyarakshana* and *Aturavikara Prashamana*.<sup>[12]</sup>

The holistic concepts of Ayurveda give emphasis to health promotion, disease prevention, early diagnosis and personalized treatment. There seem to be substantial similarities between the traditional systems like Ayurveda and the innovative approach of predictive, preventive and personalized medicine (PPPM).<sup>[13]</sup>

Also, we can clearly see the evidence of research works in Ayurvedic classical texts itself in the form of various chapters explained in the context of *Yogas* and *Chikitsas*, for example *Vatamargas* told by *Charaka* in *Vimana Sthana*, while discussing about various diseases.

## CONCLUSION

The question of research arises when there is a doubt regarding the veracity of a statement. It has been proved time and again that the basic principles of *Ayurveda* are purely scientific and have remained unchanged through the generations. A science having such a strong foundation cannot be challenged just like the classical *Vedas*. The conduction of research in *Ayurveda* is a difficult task as it believes in the individual uniqueness. Thus, this group of scholars

vehemently disapproves of any questioning of the *Ayurveda* tenets and therefore believes that the *Ayurveda* is a wholesome science and thus there is no scope of research in *Ayurveda*. सोऽयमायुर्वेदः शाश्वतो निर्दिश्यते, अनादित्वात्, स्वभावसंसिद्ध लक्षणत्वात्, भावस्वभावनित्यत्वाच्च<sup>[14]</sup> Even though *Ayurveda Shastra* is said to be *Shashwata* and *Anadi* in order to make *Prayoga* of the *Tatwas* present in the *Shastra*, the research in *Ayurveda* becomes essential as the classical texts, the guiding principles were written centuries before. A lot has changed since then which mandates the modification and renewal of the same on scientific parameters. Even the *Ayurveda* classics approve of such changes in accordance with the changing times.

## REFERENCES

1. Sharma PV. *Ayurvediya Anusandhana Paddhati*. Chaukhamba Orientalia, Varanasi. 2012.
2. Vagbhata, KR Srikanthamurthy (ed). *Ashtanga Hridaya*. English translation, Uttarasthana 40/81, Vol 3. Chowkhamba Krishnadas Academy, Varanasi, 10<sup>th</sup> edition, 2018.
3. Acharya YT. *Charaka Samhita, Vimana Sthana 8/10*. Chaukhambha Sanskrit Sansthan: Varanasi. Reprint edition 2004.
4. Acharya YT. *Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana, Chakrapani Commentary 11/17*. Chaukhambha Samskrit Sansthan: Varanasi. Reprint ed 2004.
5. Sushruta, Acharya Kaviraj Ambikadutta Shastri. *Sushruta Samhita, Sutrasthana 40/21*. Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi. reprint edition 2011.
6. Acharya YT. *Charaka Samhita with Ayurveda Deepika commentary of Chakrapani, Sutrasthana 11/19*. Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi. 2016.
7. Acharya YT. *Charaka Samhita with Ayurveda Deepika commentary of Chakrapani, Sutrasthana 8/10*. Chaukhamba Surbharati Prakashan, Varanasi. 2016.
8. YT Acharya. *Charaka Samhita, Siddhisthana 2/28*. Chaukhambha Samskrit Sansthan: Varanasi. Reprint edition 2004.
9. Sushruta, Acharya Kaviraj Ambikadutta Shastri. *Sushruta Samhita, Sutrasthana 40/19*. Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi. edition 2011.
10. YT Acharya. *Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 4/20*. Chaukhambha Samskrit Sansthan: Varanasi. Reprint edition 2004.
11. Sushruta, Acharya Kaviraj Ambikadutta Shastri. *Sushruta Samhita, Sutrasthana 7/19*. Chaukhamba Sanskrit Sansthan, Varanasi. edition 2011.
12. YT Acharya. *Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 30/26*. Chaukhambha Samskrit Sansthan: Varanasi. Reprint edition 2004.
13. Roberti di Sarsina P, Alivia M, Guadagni P. Traditional, complementary and alternative medical systems and their contribution to personalisation, prediction and prevention in medicine-person-centered medicine. *EPMA J*. 2012;3:1–15.
14. YT Acharya. *Charaka Samhita, Sutrasthana 30/27*. Chaukhambha Samskrit Sansthan: Varanasi. Reprint edition 2004.

**How to cite this article:** Arundhathi Krishnan, Anand Katti. Research in Ayurveda needed? A Samhita based debate. *J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci* 2022;2:64-68.

**Source of Support:** Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None declared.

\*\*\*\*\*