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Review Article

ETHICS OF PHYSICIAN IN AYURVEDA AND TIBETAN SYSTEM OF MEDICINE

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is one of the ancient system of medicine developed in India. Various theories, in relation to the Aetiology, Diagnosis and Treatment are mentioned in Ayurveda which are different from the other system of medicine. In Ayurveda treatment described as a team work which contains four padansh, viz, physician, medicine attendant and patient. Patient is considered as the most important part of these four components. Various qualities and duties of physician are described in Ayurveda where ethical value is given in prime importance. Tibetan system of medicine being practiced in N.E. India is a unique system of medicine working for the welfare of the sufferings. Since both Ayurvedic and Tibetan system of medicine developed in the sub continental part of India have some close relation in respect to the way of the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. Ethical value of the physician is mentioned in both the systems in details. The purpose of my comparative study is to find out similarities and dissimilarities in regard to the physician.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Sowa-Rigpa, Ethics, Physician, Quality, Identity, Definition, Classification, Duties, Reward.

INTRODUCTION

Both Ayurveda & Tibetan system of medicine are originated and practiced in Indian subcontinent with the almost similar background. Philosophical & socio-cultural factors have forced to independently flourish these two systems. Tibetan medicines most commonly known as AMCHI systems is widely practiced & accepted by monk of Buddhism & their followers. Considerable acceptance of these systems and their studies are get patronized by religious institutions of Buddhism as apart of traditional culture of Buddhism. Now Govt. of India has also shown deep interest to develop Tibetan system of medicine as one of the scientific traditional health care system.

In regard to these two health care systems and their fundamental principles certain similarities and dissimilarities are noted. These two systems needed comparative and critical evaluation in perspective of their historical and socio-cultural background. That is why the above topic has been selected for comparative study between these two systems of traditional medicine which are native of India. Regarding Ethics of physician both systems has mentioned certain specific duties, code and conduct of physician. In classical texts of Ayurveda matter related to ethics are described in various chapters while Sowa Rigpa (Tibetan system of medicine) devotes an entire chapter on role and code of conduct of physicians.

Term physician

In oxford dictionary-A person qualified to practice medicine, especially one who specializes in diagnosis and medical treatment as distinct from surgery. **In shabdakalpadruma** **bhishak means-** भिषक्- [ज्] विभेति रोगो यस्मिन्निति ।¹

In Ayurveda- भिषङ्गमि यो भिषज्यति.....च०वि०८/८६

A physician is he who treats patients, who is well versed in the applied aspects of the meanings contained in tense aphorism and who is well acquainted with all aspects of life.

Meaning of ethics

- Moral principles that govern a person's behaviour or the conducting of an activity;
- The branch of knowledge that deals with moral principles so the ethics of physician means moral principles or behaviour or conducting of an activity related to a physician during practice.

According to the 31st chapter of the Explanatory Tantra, the entire subject on the physician is divided into six categories as follows²;

- Qualities
- Identity (nature)
- The Definition
- Category (classification)
- Duty (function)
- Reward (result)

1. Qualities of physician³

Mentioned In Tibetan medical system are

- 1.1 *Loden* - Intelligent means highly learned Perfect concentration; Wise or far-sighted.
- 1.2 *Jawa la chonpa* –means wholesome and warm hearted
- 1.3 *Dhamchig* means being committed
- 1.4 *Namparjowaskill* of physician (which include; body , speech ,sharp intellect)
- 1.5 *Gyudiligence* means his commitment to the patient and being humane
- 1.6 *khepa* Professionalism means expertise and perfection.

In charka samhita which is the main text of kaya chikitsa the qualities of the physician are described in various chapters but their four main qualities are described in sutra sthana 9th chapter and some more qualities are mentioned in vimanasthana as follows,

क्षुते पर्यवदत्तित्वम् बहुशो द्रुक्कर्मतः दक्षिणम् शौचमिति

excellence in theoretical knowledge, extensive practical experience, dexterity and cleanliness⁴.

पर्यवदत्तिक्षुततः परिदृष्टकर्मतः दक्षिणम्, शौचम्, जितहस्ततः उपकरणवत् सर्वेन्द्रियोपपन्नतः प्रकृति-तः प्रतिपतित्यतः. च० वि० ८/८६

knowledge of medical texts in their entirety; practical experience; skill; purity; infallibility of prescription; possession of normal sense faculties and all the requisite equipments; knowledge of various natural manifestations; and presence of mind.

In Sushruta samhita which is the main text of shalyatantra, acharya Sushruta has mentioned the qualities of surgeon as follows⁵;

तत्त्वज्ञितगताशक्तिर्दृष्टकर्मज्ञेयमकृतिः । लघुहस्तः शुचिः शूरः सज्जोपस्करभक्षिः ॥

प्रत्युत्पन्नमतिर्धामिन् व्यवसथि विशिष्टः । सत्यधर्मपरो यश्च स् भिषक पति उच्यते ॥ सु० सू० ३४/१९-२०

a physician, who is well versed in the science of medicine and has attended to the demonstrations of surgery and medicine, and who himself practises the healing art, and is clean, courageous, light handed, fully equipped with supplies of medicine, surgical instruments and appliances, and who is intelligent, well read, and is a man of ready resources , and one command a decent practice, and is further endowed with all moral virtues, is alone fit to be called a physician.

वेद्यजीवन-

गुरोरधीतः खिलवेद्यविद्यः पीयूषपिः कुशलः क्रियसि । गतस्पृहो धैर्यधरः कृपसिः शुद्धो अधिकसि भिषगीदृशः स्यसि ॥ वे० जी० १/७

In charka samhita at the end of 9th chapter of sutra sthana other qualities of best physician also given as follows;

learning, rationality, specific knowledge, memory, devotion and action-one who possesses these six qualities, nothing remains unachievable for him. Learning, wisdom, practical knowledge, experience, accomplishment and popularity-out of these even one quality is sufficient to give significance to the degree of 'Vaidya'. The one who possesses all the auspicious qualities like learning etc, deserves to hold the honourable degree of 'Vaidya' who showers happiness on the living beings⁷.

2. Comparison of identity or nature of physician

In Tibetan medical system – Identity of physician is explained as one who is well-versed and experienced in all the

physiological functions of the body system (nes-sum, lus-zung-dun and drima-sum), and its pathological conditions (phel-zed-krugs-sum), and treatment through diet, lifestyle, medicines and physical therapies is called an accomplished physician⁸.

In Charka samhita- mentioned that the physicians should be of high descent, well-versed in scriptures, having practical knowledge, expert, clean, skilful, self-controlled, well-equipped, having all the sense organs (normal), having knowledge of constitution and course of action be regarded as promoters of vital breath and destroyers of diseases⁹.

Contrary to the *serogabhisara* are the promoters of diseases and destroyers of vital breath, hidden in disguise of physicians, Thorne like for the people and moves in countries due to carelessness of the state¹⁰.

3. Definition of physician in both the systems

In Tibetan medical system – The word *Menpa* is used for physician. Term *Menpa* is made up of two words *men* and *pa*, word *men* is defined as anything that cures the disease and brings relief to the patient; word '*pa*' means the person responsible for giving *men* or medicine¹¹.

In shabdakalpadruma bhishak means- भिषक्- [ज] विभेति रोगो यस्मिन्निति¹²

In charka samhita- It is mentioned that the word medicine means anything if administered properly capable to bring about disease free condition and that very physician, as the best one who could relieve (the patient) of the disorders¹³.

तद्वद् युक्तम् भेषज्यम् यदस्मिन्न्यत्र कल्पतः स चैव भिषजसि क्षत्री रोगेभ्यो यः प्रमोचयेत् ॥ च० सू० १/१३५

4. Comparison of Kinds of the Physician

In Tibetan medical system physician are divided into three kinds¹⁴;

1. *aiwamenpa* means the supreme or unsurpassed physician is one who can cure all the root causes of three mental poisons, desire or lust, hatred or anger, ignorance or delusion and its three resultant diseases of r lung, mkris, badkan. He is none other than medicine Buddha himself.
2. *Lana mhedpa* means the distinguished or extraordinary physician is one who possess insight into the patient's various conditions, and is highly compassionate, and whose mind, body and speech is totally faultless and truthful and who possesses the capacity to pacify the fault and sufferings of others like the bodhisattvas.
3. *Kyaparchendhang* the general or ordinary physician is specifically classified into three classes, rather broadly in to two. The first three classes are;

Nangrigs menpa; those who are appointed by the spiritual kings in virtue of their excellence in their profession and have an uninterrupted lineage of practice from their past masters.

Jejangs menpa; those who have gained proficiency in medical knowledge and skills by virtue of their difficult studies.

Laegom menpa; those who are not learned in their medical studies but have gained acceptance on the ground of their long practical association with their master's practice.

The first two type of physicians are labelled 'excellent', and the third, an ordinary physician. Those driven by greed and temporary gains and who merely hold the medical instruments and scripture are quacks and are the agents of death.

Again two types of physician has been generally categorised- supreme and inferior.

Types of physician in charka samhita-

in charka sutra 11th chapter three kinds of physicians are mentioned as follows¹⁵-

Chadmachara physician (fraudulent);

Siddhasadhita physician (imposters);

Pranabhisara physician (true physicians).

Fraudulentphysicianare those imitating the accomplished ones and others endowed with physicians qualities. Those who by virtue of having some containers with medicines, models (and charts), useless speech and look use the title of ‘physician ‘are fools and fake ones.

Siddhasadhita physician (imposters) are those who practice in the name of physician accomplished in wealth, fame and knowledge, and though not similar to them are the physicians imitating the accomplished ones¹⁶.

Pranabhisara physician (true physicians) are those who are accomplished in rational administration, knowledge, specific knowledge and spaces, and who provide happiness and promote life are the real physicians in which qualities of physicians are found¹⁷. In charak sutra 29thchapter two kinds of physicians are mentioned as one the promoters of vital breath and distroyers of diseases and other distroyers of vital breath and promoters of diseases¹⁸.

Nripvaidya are the physician who possesses knowledge of the four aspects- cause, symptoms, cure and prevention of disease, is the best one and is fit for a king¹⁹.A man well versed with the specific features of all disease, principles of their treatment and properties of all medicaments, is entitled to be a royal physician²⁰.

5. The duties of the physician:

In Tibetan medical system- The duty of physician is twofold - common and unique²¹.

A. Common duty of physician-Common duty of physician is further divided according to body, speech and mind.

Body: Physically, the physicians are duty- bound to equipped oneself with all the essential medical instruments according to medical need of the patient.

Speech: The duty as for speech involve making a clear diagnosis and prognosis. The disease should be declared loud, also disclosing the extent to which the patient expect to survive, but it is also important to make a wise and tactful diagnosis in case the physician is in doubt and with a sound humane approach, he should understood patient’s psychology and thereby gain his confidence.

Mind: With all the knowledge and application of the medical system clearly in one’s mind, without any confusion, the physician should have premeditated thoughts on the positive and negative consequences of one’s duties and responsibilities.

B. Unique duty of the physician-Unique duty of the physician is to cultivate a sound philosophy, perfect meditation and positive human conduct²².

Philosophy: The physician should avoid all extremes of attitudes. As a follower of the middle path view of *Madhyamika*, he should consider the practice of his own medical system as the genuine one for making the diagnosis. Considering the middle path in administration of diet,

lifestyle, medicine and physical therapy, he would practice his profession faultlessly. This is supreme philosophy of the physician.

Meditation: Meditating on the ‘four immeasurable’ which was mentioned earlier, he should see that he does not fall into four negative traps, namely,

➤ **Harm:** which is the opposite action of care,

➤ **Evil:** the opposite of force of compassion,

➤ **Anger:** the opposite feeling of joy,

➤ **Attachment and hatred:** the opposite of equanimity.

Positive human conduct: Behaviour from the two modes of acting, positive and negative, the physician should embrace the positive and avoid the negative. The first is to avoid all the ten demerits;

➤ **Body;** killing, theft, sexual misconduct,

➤ **Speech;** telling lie and harsh speech,

➤ **Mind;** greed, harmful intension, doubting the dharma percepts Similarly, psychotic and lunatic behaviour, misleading talks and negative egoism should be avoided at every occasion.

In Ayurveda-

Virtues of physician क्षुते पर्यवदत्तित्क्वम् बहुशो दन्तृकर्मतः दक्षिणम् शौचमिति
 च विमन् स्थन्- पर्यवदत्तित्क्षुततः परिदृष्टकर्मतः दक्षिणम्, शौचम्, जितहस्ततः उपकरणवत्तः
 सर्वेन्द्रियोपपन्नतः प्रकृति-तः प्रतिपतिग्यतः...तत्त्वः शिगतशस्त्रिणि दृष्टकम् स्वयमकृति ।
 लघुहस्तः शुचिः शूरः सज्जोपस्करभक्षिः॥
 प्रत्युत्पन्नमतिर्धीमत्ति व्यवसस्त्रि विशस्त्रिः।सत्यधर्मपरो यश्च स् भिषक पत्ति उच्यतः सु० सू०
 ३४/१९-२०
 वेद्यजीवन-गुरोरधीतस्त्रिखिलवेद्यविद्यःपीयूषपाणिः कुशलः क्रियस्त्रि । गतस्पृहो धैर्यधरः कृपस्त्रिः
 शुद्धोअधिकस्त्रि भिषगीदृशः स्यत्स्त्रि ॥

It is further added that even if the other three props are absent or inadequate, a clever physician will be able to manage by himself²³.

Specifically, as regards to the qualities of physician, Ayurveda says that in the care of the suffering, a physician needs technical skill, scientific knowledge and humane understanding. The physician, who uses these with courage, humility and wisdom, can provide unique service, and build an enduring edifice of character for himself.

He should never forget that his primary and foremost objectives are to be altruistic, prevention and cure of diseases and bring relief to the suffering²⁴. The physician should be compassionate as described by acharya Caraka: with friendship (maître) towards all, compassion for ailing (karunya), love and devotion to patients (sakyePriti) and acceptance of the inevitable in the case of dyeing(upeksanam)²⁵.

मैत्रीकारुण्यमार्तेषुशक्येप्रीतिरुपेक्षणम्
 प्रकृतिस्थेषुभूतेषुवैद्यवृत्तिश्चतुर्विधेति॥२६॥ ch.su.9/26
 Thus, one of the striking features of Ayurveda is its humane approach.

Diagnosed before treatment

रोगमादौपरीक्षेतततोऽनन्तरमौषधम्
 ततःकर्मभिषक्पश्चाज्जानपूर्वसमाचरेत्॥ch.su20/20

It is mentioned in charka samhita that the physician should examine the disease first then the drug and thereafter the management. He should always proceed with prior

knowledge. The physician who without knowing the disease starts the treatment succeeds by chance even if he is well-versed in management with drugs. One who knows the characters of disease, is well versed in all therapeutic measures and is acquainted with the proper measures of place and time succeeds undoubtedly²⁶.

After the completion of the medical education, the physician is certainly endowed with either Brahma sattva(the mental faculty of brahma) or Rshisattva (mental faculty of a Rsi). Therefore, he is called a “Vaidya” and a dvija²⁷.

भिषगप्यत्रिं सवन् स्वसुतत्रिव यत्नवन् । आब्रह्मिणो हि सम् रक्षतिष्ठन् धर्ममनुत्तमम् ॥ ch.chi1/4/56

The physician should treat all his patients like his children. He should take care of their health and keep them away from miseries, if he is desirous of dharma (virtues) per excellence²⁸.

A person who pursues medical profession just out of compassion for the living beings and not for artha (wealth) or kama (satisfaction of the wordy desires) excels all others. A physician who practises his profession as a saleable commodity for earning wealth, is (as a matter of fact) running after a heap of ash instead of gold²⁹.

Ayurveda has some important views about patients suffering from terminal illnesses. It is the duty of the physician that when a patient is being dragged to death by “yama” the noose is to be cut and the patient to be brought back to life³⁰. Therefore, none is equal to a physician in the world, for no other gift excels the gift of life. It is also mentioned that Compassion for the living creatures is the dharma per excellence³¹.

It is also lays down that how the physician is to conduct himself when he visits a patient’s home. He would go on a call only on a request , maintain the dress code ; pay attention to the patient only; Examine him properly; Maintain strict confidentiality and Make both the prognosis and diagnosis in a guarded manner. The physician is advised not to accept anything from the ladies of the house without the knowledge of their husbands/guardians. He is not to laugh, cut jokes, talk with the ladies when they are alone; the peculiar customs of the patient’s household shall not be made public. He is not to treat the patients who hate the king and the good physicians who are always busy in work, fearful, ungrateful, who criticize the Vaidyas and who are non –obedient³². He should always follow the principle of the ideal therapy.

6. Resultor Reward to physician

In Tibetan medical system

It is mentioned that reward to physician is of two types; temporary and everlasting³³.

The temporary result of the accomplished physician is the happiness in his life, gain in power, wealth and well- being. The everlasting reward or the final outcome would be his attainment of enlightenment, provided he overcomes all the

negativities of deceit and selfishness with body, speech and mind.

In Ayurveda- In Ayurveda no such reference is found, but results of ideal treatment given here and there in Ayurveda samhita which can be considered under temporary and everlasting such as it is mentioned that , the person who have complete knowledge of Ayurveda gain two types of reward as given in sushrutasamhita-

अत्रस्त्रिभेदिकमस्त्रिभिकम् च् क्षयइति । सु०, सू०, अ०।

Discussion- *In Tibetan medicine qualities of a physician described under six headings, while in Ayurveda qualities of a physician given inCharka Sutrasthana 9th chapter, Charka Vimanasthana 8th chapter, in Sushruta samhita Sutrasthana 34th chapter are similar as mentioned in Tibetan medicine.

* In both the system identity of the physician is nearly similar.

* comparison of the qualities of a physician in both the systems are given below.

1. *Loden-Intelligent-* क्षुते, पर्यवदत्रिक्वम्, तत्वश्रिगतशस्त्रिं, गुरोरधीतस्त्रिखिलवेद्यविद्यः
2. *jawa la chonpa-being compassionate-* कृपस्त्रिः
3. *dhamchig-* being committed-in qualities no terms in Ayurveda
4. *namparjowa-* skill of physician -दक्षिणम्, जितहस्तत
5. *gyu- diligent(careful or persistent work effort)-* तत्परतक्रिय
6. *khepa-* being proficient in social ethics- described in vaidyavriti.

*Meaning of *Menpa* given in Tibetan system almost similar to reference given in charka samhita sutra 1/135 about drug and physician.

*In both systems three kinds of physician are mentioned. In Tibetan system three kinds of physician are supreme (unsurpassed), extra ordinary and ordinary or general physician while in Charka Samhita three kinds of physician areChadmachara (fraudulent) Siddhasadhita (imposters) Pranabhisara (true physicians). Qualities of the three kinds of physician mentioned in Tibetan system are different from the physician mentioned in Ayurveda. In Tibetan system G-nangrigs type of physician can be correlated with king physician (nripa- vaidya) of charakasamhia. Rjeg-sjang and Les- sgomes types of physician can be partially correlated with pranabhisara (true physician). It can be concluded that the general physician in Tibetan system can be correlated with pranabhisarabhishak of Ayurveda. Both the system have given same explanation about the quake.

Correlation between classification of physician of Tibetan medicine and Ayurvedic system of medicine may be presented as follows;

Three types of physician in Tibetan system of medicine	Three types of physician in Ayurveda
1. <i>aiwamenpa</i> means the supreme orunsurpassed	1.Chadmachara physician (fraudulent);
2. <i>Lana mhedpa</i> means the distinguished orextraordinary	2.Siddhasadhitaphysician (imposters);
3. <i>Kyapar chendhang</i> the general or ordinary physician	3.Pranabhisara physician (true physicians)
Two types of physician in Tibetan medicine again physician are classified in to; supreme and inferior.	Two types of physician in Ayurveda; while in Ayurveda two types of physician are;Pranabhisaraphysician, rogabhisara physician.

*Comparative study of both the systems shows that the Tibetan system divided the duty of physician in two forms common and unique while in Ayurveda no such division is given. Common duty of physician as described in Tibetan systems in the form of body, speech and mind is also described in Ayurveda. Unique duty of a physician in Tibetan system such as philosophy related to the duty of physician states that physician should adopt middle path and should have faultless knowledge is same described in Ayurveda as having profound knowledge of subject (*Paryavadata*). Positive human conduct is described in both the systems are nearly same.

CONCLUSION

After comparative study of both the system, it can be concluded that all the six categories about physician given in Tibetan system is nearly similar as mentioned in Ayurveda in regards to qualities, identity, definition and results. There is some difference in classification and duties of physician in both the systems but in both systems physician are devoted for the welfare of the patient. This part of comparative study may be helpful to understand ethical value described for physician. Nearly same ethical value is mentioned in both systems indicate that close relation. Further study of these two systems of traditional medicine may be helpful to understand ethnic health culture of different tribes of Himalayan region more specifically different tribes of hills and N.E. India or even health culture of south East Asian countries like Thailand, Cambodia, Mongolia etc, which are in general inclined towards Buddhist religion.

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