

A Comparison Study to Assess Ojas Status in Stressed People

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Abstract

The idea of ojas is peculiar to Ayurveda. Even though ojas is seen as a fundamental component of an individual's life and well-being, the notion remains unclear in the eyes of society. Ojas is thought to be the essence of the dhatus, and it is in charge of bodily upkeep. Depletion of Ojas has various negative impacts on an individual's mental and physical health, and can even result in death. Rapid cultural modernisation, rapidly evolving technology, and changing lifestyles have enabled man to overcome previously unfathomable barriers. At the same time, it has had negative impacts on the human body. The increasing speed has given rise to a new breed of illnesses, which has a terrible influence on society. It has been the primary cause of the horrible health situation. According to recent assessments, work-related stress has increased by 57% in India. While describing the causes of ojas vitiation, Ayurvedic texts emphasise psychological situations such as wrath, stress, grief, and tiredness after activity. Fear, debility, an unstable mind, cheerlessness, excessive concern, and other symptoms have been reported by Ojakshay lakshana acharyas. These symptoms can even be present in people who are stressed. There has been no research done to far to investigate the state of ojas in stressed people.

Keywords: - Skin Problems, Charak Sutrasthana, Skin Ailments, Vikaara Prashamanam

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is an ancient Indian medical system based on sound philosophical and experimental concepts. It focuses on physical, psychological, and spiritual health, and it is the science that deals with the notion of whole health.

Acharyas explicitly said that a healthy person is one whose humours (doshas) and metabolic condition (agni) are in balance, the functional activities of the tissues and excretory system are in harmony, and the soul, senses, and mind are in good health.

The human body is made up of three fundamental components, vata, pitta, and kapha, three malas-mutra, purisha, and sweda, and the saptadhatus rasa, rakta, mamsa, medas, asthi, majja, and shukra. According to Ayurveda, ojus is the substance of all seven dhatus, and it is the prasaadpaka of all the dhatwagnis.

While describing the production of ojus, Acharya Charaka uses the analogy that, much as a bramara or a bee collects honey from flowers, ojus is generated as a consequence of the collection of snehabhaga from all the dhatus. According to Chakrapani, ojus is synthesised from dhatus saara and carried to hridaya, where it is distributed throughout the body, ie

ojus is combined with rasa. The vikshepana karma of vyana vayu aids the rasaroopi ojus in reaching the dasadhamani, where it is distributed throughout the body. According to Chakrapani, hridayam is the seat of paraojus, while aparaojus is prevalent throughout the body.

The amount of paraojus is ashtabindu, while the amount of aparaojus is ardhanjali. Vagbhata stated that the quantity was one prasrita⁵. According to Arunadatta, ojus is found throughout the body, with six drops of ojus contained in the hridayam.

The paraojus is regarded as sreshta, and it is stated that any aberration will result in sudden death. This implies that the phrase dushti of ojus refers to the depreciation of aparaojus from its initial amount.

Ojakshaya is caused by psychological factors such as rage, hunger, anxiety, sadness, weariness, trauma, and so on. Ojakshaya is caused by dhatukshaya, kopa, soka, dhyana, srama, and kshut, according to Acharya Susrutaabhogata. Ojakshaya symptoms have been characterised by Acharya Charaka and Vagbhata as anxiety, debility, excessive concern, discomfort in sense organs, loss of complexion, unstable

mentality, cheerlessness, roughness, and emaciation⁸. Acharya Susruta has described giddiness, muscular withering, hallucination, madness, and death.

According to Nibandhakara, excessive usage of kashayatikta, guru sheeta, rooksha, vishtambaahara, and excessive engagement in techniques such as vegavighata, vyayama, vyavaya, vyadhikarshana, ojus becomes vitiated.

There are three varieties of ojus vitiation: ojovisramsas, ojovyapat, and ojakshaya.

The term visramsas implies "movement away from the seat."

Ojovisramsas symptoms include loss of joint compactness, bodily weakness, displacement of doshas from their normal places, impairment of body functioning, and a sense of exhaustion.

Ojovyapat lakshanas include physical stiffness and heaviness, swelling caused by vitiated vata skin discoloration or changes in complexion, exhaustion, drowsiness, and excessive sleep.

Emaciation and a decrease in digestive ability have been reported as symptoms by Nibandhakaras.

Ojakshaya lakshanas include impaired vision, digestive capacity, and accumulated vata lakshana, which will eventually lead to marana.

Stress

In today's competitive environment, stress is an unavoidable aspect of life. Stress is defined in biology as "anything that constitutes a real or apparent threat that negatively impacts a person." Stress may be caused by a variety of circumstances such as changes in the environment, fear, worry, shock, sadness, pain, and so on.

The ability of the body to cope with stressful events is referred to as eustress. Stress, on the other hand, becomes distress when the individual fails to manage with it; hence, it is frequently stated that eustress aids in performance while distress causes a variety of health problems.

The many forms of stress are as follows:

Eustress: This is a pleasurable and exciting sort of stress, also known as good stress. It keeps the person stimulated and helps the individual fulfil the deadline.

Acute stress is a type of short-term stress that can be good, negative, or upsetting. It is common in everyday life.

Episodic acute stress: Acute stress that seems to run rampant and be a part of life.

Chronic stress: Stress that seems to never end and is inescapable.

The body responds to stress with a fight or flight response, during which specific chemicals such as adrenaline and cortisol are produced. Because hormones may go anywhere in the body, the effects of cortisol can be noticed almost anywhere¹².

Cortisol increases the amount of energy available to the brain and muscles, hence increasing speed and response time. This increases heart rate, slows digestion, redirects blood flow to main muscle groups, and alters several other autonomic nerve activities, providing the body with a burst of energy and power.

When the perceived danger is removed, systems are supposed to return to normal via relaxation responses; but, in the case of chronic stress, the relaxation process does not occur frequently, and this incapacity can cause harm to the body. The first symptoms are relatively mild, such as chronic headaches and increased susceptibility to colds.

However, prolonged exposure to chronic stress causes serious health problems such as diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, hyperthyroidism, obesity, hair loss, weight loss, sexual dysfunction, ulcers, tooth and gum disease, and so on.

Excessive stress affects several systems in the body, including the digestive system, metabolism (including body weight imbalances), musculoskeletal system, immunological system, neurological system, cardiovascular system, and reproductive system.

Excessive stress can also have an effect on one's mental and emotional health. It also has a negative impact on the health of the teeth, hair, nails, and bones. Stress can eventually harm a person's health.

BACKGROUND AND REASONING

Stress is prevalent in India at 89 percent, compared to the global average of 86 percent.

Stress reduces one's quality of life by interfering with the correct functioning of nearly all of the body's systems, resulting in a disruption of internal homeostasis.

It can have an impact on people's emotional and physical health. According

to Ayurveda, ojus is the essence of the seven dhatus and plays an important role in homeostasis. This dhatu essence can only be created when the dhatuparinama is correct, and stress has a negative influence on almost all of the body's functions, including the digestive system. There have been no research done to determine the state of ojus in stressed persons, thus this study makes an attempt.

METHODOLOGY

Type of study- Observational Sudysetting-
Pariyaram, Kannur

Sample size-15

Sampling technique- consecutive

Inclusion criteria

Individuals of age group between 20-50
years

Individuals having stress

Excusion criteria

Pregnant and lactating women

Subjects with mental illness

Individuals consuming medications for
systemic illness Alcoholics

Details of material

1. Research proforma - contained questions regarding gender, age, type of work etc.

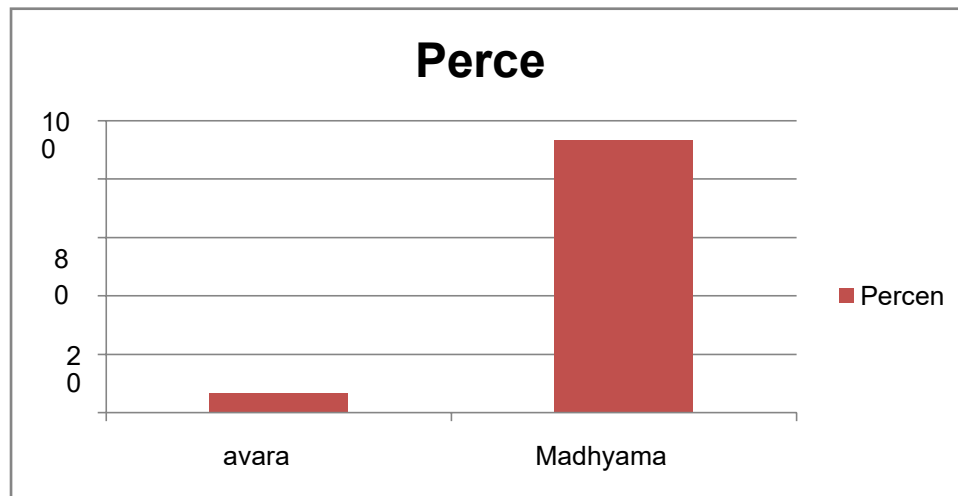
2. Ojus assessment tool- The status of Ojus was assessed by a validated questionnaire developed by dept of kriya sareera containing 37 questions. The tool for the assessment of status of ojus is analysed in an objective grading way, grading from high score to low score. Zero to thirty is considered as avaraojus, thirty one to sixty as madhyama ojus and sixty one to ninety as pravaraojus.

3. Stress assessment questionnaire-.Stress assessment was done by a validated tool developed by national centre for health statistics, NHANES study.

Procedure- In this study 25 individuals were screened for stress by administering stress assessment tool .The age group considered was 20-50 yrs .Fifteen individuals were identified for stress and ojus assessment tool was administered to them. There were 7 male subjects and 8 female subjects.

Two individuals belonged to 20-30 yrs group. Eight individuals belonged to 30-40 yrs group and five individuals belonged to 40-50 yrs group.

Observation and Analysis



Correlation coefficient

Correlations

			OJUS	STRESS
Spearman's rho	OJUS	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.649**
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.	.004
		N	15	15
	STRESS	Correlation Coefficient	.649**	1.000
		Sig. (1-tailed)	.004	.
		N	15	15
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).				

It was observed that Subjects with avaraojus were 6.7% and subjects with madhyama ojus were 93.3%. Subjects in stress zone were 66.7% and subjects in distress zone were 33.3%. It was also observed that many of the symptoms in ojakshaya and stress were common. The following are the symptoms

1. Fatigue(gatrasaada)
2. Heavyness(gurugatrata)
3. Skin discoloration(varnabheda)
4. Loss of strength(glani)
5. Dryness(rukshata)
6. Sareerakriyassannirodha(physical efficacy impaired)
7. Mamsakshay(muscle weakness)
8. Durmana(unhappy)
9. Mental efficiency impairment (manasakriyasannirodha)
10. Bhaya (Fear)
11. Abheekshanamadhyaanam(excess worry)

RESULT

The Spearman correlation coefficient value observed in this analysis is 0.649 and the correlation was significant at 0.01 level, which shows that there is a statistically significant association between ojus score and stress score and also some of the symptoms shown in stress and ojukshaya were found to be similar.

DISCUSSION

Significance between ojus score and stress score was assessed using spearman's correlation coefficient and the level of significance was 0.649. The connection between the mind and body is apparent when one examines the impact stress has on life. Similarly ojas has an influence on mind and body. Diet helps to develop and maintain the body.

Ayurveda has given utmost importance to ahara, by explaining it under the trayopstambhas. Every individual experiences stress in their lifetime and the response to stress varies from individual to individual, some may resort to overeating to fill an emotional void at the same time another stressed individual eats less or quits food. As in the case of overeating individuals, they usually resort to comfort foods which are rich in fat and sugar and less in nutrition¹³.

Heavy or guru ahara as per Ayurveda causes agnimandya and dosha prakop, the nourishment of dhatus is hampered and since Ojus is said to be the essence of saptadhatu, the formation of ojas is affected. In stressed individuals, who quit food or eat less there is no formation of ahara rasa, leading to further depreciation of subsequent dhatu formation, the varna,

bala, sneha which are the gunas of ojus(qualities conferred by ojus on the body) are depleted by the vitiated dosha and dhatus. In consequence the individual suffers from impoverished dhatu and devitalisation, thereby affecting the status of ojus in the body. A stressed individual clearly depicts signs of rasakshaya, like roukshya, shrama, shosha, hritkampa, glani ,tandra, that itself suggests the vitiation of dhatu at the root level further hampers the formation of ojus.

Studies shows that mental stress changes the heart rate and rhythm of heart, even in patients without evidence of heart disease¹⁴.Ojakshaya can cause fainting, emotional confusion and death¹⁵.Research suggest that mental stress particularly in patients who already have arrhythmias can eventually lead to death.

In Ayurvedic classics while describing the causes of ojakshaya, psychological conditions such as anger, tension, sorrow exhaustion, trauma, kopa, dhyana, srama and kshut are mentioned, all these causes are seen as symptoms in stressalso. These causes lead to vitiation of hridayagataojus in extreme situations, leading to death ,perhaps that must reason behind the lakshanamarana mentioned in ojakshay by Acharyas. In

Charaka nidana Acharyas have said sahasamvarjayet that means individual should avoid over exertion as it adversely affects the body by causing ojakshaya, there by affecting the immunity and increasing the susceptibility of various infectious diseases¹⁶. Therefore sahasa should be avoided as far as possible and body should be well protected by taking adequate care of the three sub pillars of life.

The manifestation of systemic illness as an aftermath of stress depends on its chronicity, similarly the extent, degree and intensity of vitiation of ojus depends on the etiological factors ranging from physical to psychological. The symptamatology of ojovisramsa, vyapath and kshay may occur in various disease conditions also.

CONCLUSION

The concept of ojus is unique to Ayurveda.Ojus plays a vital role in maintenance of body,(dehasthithi) ,its contributes in maintaining the homeostasis. The physical and mental attributes are influenced by the status of ojus. Sahasa should be avoided as far as possible and body should be protected by taking adequate care of ones self by following the regimens (dinacharya

,ratricharya) giving special importance to the trayopsthambhas of life.

The causes of ojakshaya like bhaya ,krodha, worry, kopa, dhyana ,srama, shoka etc were also seen as symptoms in stress. As per Ayurveda, prasannaatma, mana and indriya contribute to swasthya or health of an individual. Therefore it can be inferred that stress wears down the body on psychological and systemic levels, acting as a contributing factor for ojakshaya and variety of illness, therefore its influence on body should not be overlooked.

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