

ANATOMICAL ASPECT OF KARNAVEDHANA SAMSAKARA

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ABSTRACT

The word *Samsakara* also introduced as, “*Samsakaro Hi Gunantaradhyum Ucchate*”, means qualitative improvement is carried out by incorporating the specific qualities. *Samsakara*’s are also known as cultural ceremonies. *Samsakara*’s are important events in an individual’s life right from the conception to the death. These cultural events not only processes socio-cultural importance, but there is also have great medical importance in *Ayurveda*. The number of *samsakara*’s varies in different communities. The customary *Samsakara*’s are 16 in number which were put forward by *Maharshi Dayananda*. *Karnavedhana* is one of the important *Samsakara* with medical and socio cultural relevance. In addition to cosmetic value

(*karnaabhushana*). It was belived that *karnavedhana* protects the body untoward health complications like *Grhas*. Piercing the ear may help to active immune mechanism so as to bring secondary immunity against several infections. Ear lobule is made up of strong aerolar and adipose tissues, which are normally smooth however they normally shows cerases. It has very large amount of blood supply and may assist in keeping the ears warm and maintaining the balance. Ear lobule has various nerve endings. *Karnavehana* is a type of acupuncture. Acupuncture is a complete medical protocol focused on correcting imbalances of energy in the body. Acupuncture has been used traditionally to prevent, diagnose and treat disease as well as improve general health. Different styles of body piercing, every kind of body piercing was done with the specific intention and to reap certain health benefits. These cultural events

also enhance child growth and development. These events also have scientific validity and proved medical importance. This article analyzed this *Samsakara* in detail and gives a critical approach to their relevance in light of modern scientific knowledge.

KEYWORDS: *Samsakara, Anatomy of ear, Karnavedhana Samsakara, Accupuncture, Body piercing.*

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a science of life. It is a *Upveda* of *Atharvaveda*. *Samsakra's* are explained in Indian literature right from the *vedic* period. *Ayurvedic samhitas* have also described various *samsakar's* with its time period and method. All *samsakara's* mentioned in Indian literature are not having medical importance among them few are of sociocultural importance. Childrens are wealth of nation. A country youth health status both physically and psychologically depends up on care taken in his childhood period. Cultural events are the vital events which play important role in better growth and development of child. These events also play vital role in early detection of any abnormality in child growth and development.

In *Ayurveda* the word *Samsakara* is introduced as, "*Samsakaro hi Gunantaradhyum Ucchate*", which means qualitative improvement is carried out by incorporating the specific qualities (transporting of the qualities).^[1] Physician can also asses the proper growth and development of child while performing the *Samsakaras*. The *Upanishads* mention *Samsakars* as a menans to grow and proper in all four aspects of human pursuit- *Dharma*(righteousness), *Artha*(wealth), *Karma* and *Kama* (work and pleasure), and *Moksha*(salvation).^{[2][3]} *Samsakra's* are the turning point of life and need to be celebrate. The primary purpose of *Samsakaras* is to attain spirituality and help to realize *Moksha* or ultimate union with the devine. It is very clear that merely performing these sacraments will not lead to *Moksha*. However not performing these *Samsakara* may mark it impossible to attain *Moksha*. The number of *Samsakara* varies in different *Hindu Dharma*. It is about 16-40.^[4] In *Gruhya sutra* there is mentioning of 18-21 *Samsakara*, while in *Manusmruti* 13 of them and in *Gautam Gruhya Sutra* 40 of them are explained. while the 16 *Samsakara* explained by *Maharshi Dayanand* are widely accepted and taken in to consideration by *Ayurveda Acharyas*.^[5] These 16 *Samsakara* are often reffered to as the *Shodasa Samsakaras*.^{[6][7]}

Karnavehana Samsakara (piercing the ear lobes)- It is one of the important *Samsakara* with medical and socio- cultural relevance. *Karnavedhana* is a type of acupuncture.^[8] In acupuncture inserting very thin needle through a persons skin at specific points on the body to various depths. Research suggest that it can helps to relieve pain and bring the energy flow back in to proper balance.^[9] Acupuncture points are seen as places where nerves, muscles and connective tissue can be stimulated. The stimulation increases blood flow while at the same time triggering the activity of the body's natural painkiller's.^[10] Modern research has demonstrated acupuncture's effects on the nervous system, endocrine and immune systems cardiovascular system, and digestive system. By stimulating the body's various system. Acupuncture can help to resolve pain, and improve sleep, digestive function and sense of well being. Body piercing is a form of body modification, it is the practice of puncturing or cutting a part of the humans body, creating an opening in which jewelry may be worm.^[11] Ear piercing, nose piercing, lip, tongue, nipple, genital piercing have also been practiced by various culture. There can be different cultural, religious or individual reasons for a person deciding to have a piercing. Most often body piercing are made for aesthetic reasons but what we do not realise is that, this act can actually cause harmful effects on us if it is done at an inappropriate place. However piercing are made at the appropriate acupuncture points, we can experience positive spiritual benefits.^[12]

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Material

- Ayurvedic literature related to *Samsakara* and *Karnavedhanana Samsakra* collected from classical Ayurvedic literature.
- Modern literature related to acupuncture and body piercing collected from research articles, journals.

Methodology: Literary study.

DISCUSSION

In *Hindu* culture it is believe that every aspect of life is sacred, so due to this reason each important stage, from conception to *Anteyeshthi*(death ceremation) is distinguished as special rituals. The *Samsakaras* are performed for the physical, social and religious development of the individual. At a secondary level the *Samsakaras* are cultural events that provide occasion

for family and friends to get together and bond. And it is this bonding that forms the basis for a peaceful life.

Anatomy of External ear

Ear is composed of external, middle and internal ear. The development of the external ear is a complex process that involves the merger of the 6 auricular hillocks. Development begins at 3rd weeks of gestation with formation of otic disc from thickening of ectoderm. It is formed from single piece of yellow elastic cartilage covered with perichondrium and skin.^[12]

Human ear lobe is composed of tough areolar and adipose connective tissue lacking the firmness and elasticity of the rest of the auricle. Since ear lobe does not contain cartilage. It has a large blood supply and may help to warm the ear and maintain balance.

Ear lobe is built of epithelium and connective tissue, is derived from dermatomes. The dermis is derived from cells of mesenchymal cells, whereas mesenchyme is derived from the sclerotome.

Auricle is supplied by posterior auricular artery, anterior auricular branch of superficial temporal artery, and occipital artery. Sensory innervations are.^[13]

- 1) Great auricular nerve – it is a branch of cervical plexus, it supplies auricle, helix, antihelix and lobule.
- 2) Lesser occipital nerve- supplies small portion of helix.
- 3) Auriculotemporal nerve-Mandibular branch of trigeminal nerve, supplies auricle.
- 4) Auricular branch of vagus nerve- supplies concha and auditory meatus.^[14]

Karnavehana Samsakara(Piercing the earlobes)

This *samsakara* is done at the infantile age. The term infant is typically applied to young children between the age of 1 month up to 1 year. There are different views about performing this ceremony in Ayurvedic text.

- a) According to *Sushruta* in 6th or 7th month.
- b) According to *Vagbhata* in 6th, 7th, 8th month.
- c) There is a chapter named “*Chudakarmiye*” in *kashyapa Samhita*.

Procedure

According to *Sushruta* in the sixth or seventh month, on fortnight and auspicious *Tithi*(date), *Karana*, *Muhurta*, and *Nakshatra*, after reciting auspicious hymns, the child should be placed

in the lap of wet-nurse or male attendant engaging and consoling him with toys; then physician pulling the ear with his left hand should pierce the ear lobe at the naturally designed hole enlightened with the sun's rays (*Devkrit chhidra*) where there is maximum translucency from the light source with his right hand slowly and evenly by needle or awl in case of thin and thick lobes respectively; in male child firstly right ear lobe should be pierced but in female child, first left ear should be pierced and then the *Pichhu varti* be inserted. Similar procedure mentioned by *Vagbhata*. Contraindication of *Karnavedhana Samsakara* is *Ajirna*(indigestion), urge of defecation, excessive hot climate.

Importanace of *Karnavedhana Samsakara*

1. By *Sushruta* the child's ear are pierced for the purpose of *Raksha-nimit* (protection from diseases) and *Abhushanartha* (ornamentation). According to *Kashyapa* the experienced and expert physician should pierced the ear of child, for achievement of religion (*Dharma*), desire(*Karma*), and wealth(*Artha*). It seems that this procedure may stimulate the strengthening immune system in response to injury to the ear lobules which initiate antigen-antibody reaction in early life period so as to bring a secondary immunity against several infections.
2. By *Sushruta* and *Kashyapa* this procedure must be performed by expert surgeon not by unexpert *vaidya* which leads to various complications like fever, *Manyastambha*, *Hanustambha*, *Karnashoola* etc.
3. This rite is intended to open the inner ears of the child for receiving sacred sound. This also possesses deep mystical and symbolic significance.
4. Modes to increase the pierced hole offers lubrication and prevention of wound infection. Selection of winter for the procedure also decreases chances of infection.
5. Holding ear lobule against sun visualizes course of fine vessels to avoid bleeding and early wound healing is possible.
6. Wearing the ornaments in the ear is signified the status and the wealth of the person. The women also ensured a continuous state of physical and mental well being.
7. According to acupuncture therapy the earlier the child's ear is pierced it is good for the meridians connecting the brain pass through this area and thus helps in the quick development of the brain. They also state that the point of vision is situated in the center of the lobe.

8. There are lots of other benefits related to the piercing of ears in girl, it is said to maintain regularity in the menstrual cycle and also aids in freeing one self from hysteria and other notable diseases.
9. The earrings are believed to help in maintaining the flow of electric current in a human body. Piercing of ears helps in enhancing the mind and to throw away bad humors.
10. *Sushruta* the great Indian surgeon advocates ear piercing by saying that it prevents diseases like hydrocele and hernia.
11. The ear lobes contain meridian points that connect to the right and left hemisphere of the human brain. When this point is pierced it helps to activate these parts of brain.
12. The principles of acupuncture therapy states that it helps the quick and healthy development of brain and enhance memory.

Significance of Navaratna (Gemstone)

Natural gemstones indeed work on the human body. It can protect one from demons, snakes, poisons, diseases and other dangers. Wearing a pearl reduces or waves off the negative influence of the planet moon. Gemstones were added for therapeutic effects i.e. ruby regulates menstruation and decreases the infertility.

Gemstone		Benefits
1.	Ruby (<i>Manek</i>)	Focus and ability to command, enhances leadership, independence and purity.
2.	Pearl (<i>Moti</i>)	Mental and emotional stability, sociability, control over thoughts.
3.	Emerald (<i>Panna</i>)	Strong memory and communication skills
4.	Red coral (<i>Moonga</i>)	Courage, energy, understanding and ability to win.
5.	Yellow sapphire (<i>Pukhraj</i>)	Wisdom and compassion.
6.	Diamond (<i>Heera</i>)	Luxury, pleasure and wealth
7.	Blue sapphire (<i>Neelam</i>)	Humility, tolerance and maturity.
8.	Hessonite (<i>Gomed</i>)	Ability to know one's own mind and self
9.	Cat's eye (<i>Vaidurya</i>)	Clarity of thoughts, vision and spiritual awakening

Body piercing Importance

1. Nose piercing- According to *Ayurvedic* therapy, piercing the nose around the specific node on the nostrils reduces the pain experienced by the women during monthly periods, the nerves of the left nostrils are linked with the brain so piercing the nose at this specific position play a vital role in easing child birth.
2. Lip piercing- Vital role in stimulating sexual feeling.

3. Nipple piercing- To enhance their self esteem and boost confidence level play a vital role in maintaining your youthful appearance. Sexual stimulation is increased.

CONCLUSION

Samsakara's are vital events or ceremonies in one's life. We can conclude that cultural ceremonies not only have social importance, but also have a great medical importance. One should follow proper *Samsakara* according to the chronological age of child. It will also help child in better growth and development. *Karnavedhana Samsakara* have great importance, auricular acupuncture appears to modify the autonomic dysfunction by increasing parasympathetic activity. Because of *karnavedhana* it stimulates vagus nerve, which also supplies to the stomach hence appetite should be increased which is important for growth of child. In clinical trials, auricular electropuncture reduced seizure frequency and attenuated seizure severity. Electroacupuncture suppressed epileptic discharges. Acupuncture improves the body's functions and promotes the natural self healing process by stimulating specific anatomical sites.

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