

THE EPISTEMOLOGICAL FOUNDATION OF LIFE: THE IMPACT OF NYAYA DARSHAN ON AYURVEDA**Dr. Ritu Soni^{1*}, Dr. Vivek Shrivastava²**¹Associate Professor, Govt. Ayurved College, Jabalpur, MP.²Associate Professor, Dept. of Samhita Siddhant, Govt. Ayurved College, Rewa MP.

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Corresponding Author*Dr. Ritu Soni**

Associate Professor, Govt. Ayurved
College, Jabalpur, MP.



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ABSTRACT

The evolution of Ayurveda from an empirical collection of health observations into a structured medical science is largely credited to the integration of Nyaya Darshan, the Indian school of logic and epistemology. This paper examines the philosophical and methodological influence of Nyaya on Ayurvedic diagnostic, therapeutic, and investigative frameworks. By adopting Nyaya's four Pramanas (means of valid knowledge) and the Panchavayava (five-membered syllogism), Ayurveda established a rigorous scientific method. The study further explores how Nyaya's theory of causality (Karya-Karana Siddhanta) and its rules for debate (Vadamarga) provided the intellectual tools necessary for the Charaka Samhita to standardize medical practice. Ultimately, the paper concludes that Nyaya Darshan serves as the "logical skeleton" that supports the "biological body" of Ayurveda.

KEYWORDS: Pramana, karya karan siddhanta, Panchavayava, Vada, Nyaya Darshana.**INTRODUCTION: The Union of Philosophy and Medicine**

Ancient Indian knowledge systems are categorized into Darshanas (philosophical schools). While Ayurveda is an Upaveda (applied science), it relies heavily on the Astika (orthodox) schools of philosophy for its theoretical grounding. Among these, Nyaya Darshan, founded by Sage Gautama, provides the methodology for "right thinking" and "truth-seeking."

In the early Vedic period, medicine was often a mix of observation and ritual. However, during the classical period of the great Samhitas (Charaka and Sushruta), medicine required a way to prove why a certain herb worked or how a disease originated. Nyaya provided this bridge. It offered a system of logic that allowed ancient physicians to categorize the world, define the nature of evidence, and arrive at conclusions that were not merely based on faith, but on verifiable reasoning.

The Epistemological Framework: The Four Pramanas

The most direct impact of Nyaya on Ayurveda is the adoption of the Pramanas. In Nyaya, knowledge is only valid if the means of acquiring it is sound. Ayurveda utilizes these to build a clinical picture of a patient.

A. Pratyaksha (Direct Perception)

Nyaya defines Pratyaksha as knowledge arising from the contact of the senses with their objects. In Ayurveda, this is the first step of diagnosis (Darshana and Sparshana).

* Visual Inspection: Observing the color of the skin, the coating on the tongue, and the brightness of the eyes.

* Tactile Examination: Feeling the pulse (Nadi), the texture of the skin, and the presence of localized heat or swelling.

B. Anumana (Inference)

Inference is the process of knowing the "unseen" through the "seen." Nyaya's influence is most visible here because many internal diseases cannot be seen directly.

* Example: A physician observes a patient's low appetite (seen) and infers that the digestive fire or Agni is weak (unseen).

* Example: Observing physical fatigue to infer the depletion of Ojas (vital essence).

C. Upamana (Comparison and Analogy)

Upamana is the knowledge of a thing through its similarity to another well-known thing. This allowed Ayurvedic teachers to explain complex medical conditions to students.

* Dhanustambha: Tetanus is described by comparing the patient's body to a "bent bow" (Dhanush).

* Vrikka: The kidneys are described as being shaped like "beans."

D. Shabda / Aptopadesha (Authoritative Testimony)

Nyaya accepts the word of a reliable authority (Apta) as a valid source of knowledge. In Ayurveda, this refers to the timeless wisdom recorded in the Samhitas. A physician starts with the Aptopadesha (the text), verifies it through Pratyaksha (observation), and confirms it through Anumana (inference).

The Five-Membered Syllogism in Medical Logic

Nyaya's Panchavayava is perhaps the world's oldest formal system of logic. Ayurveda uses this to ensure that a diagnosis is not a guess, but a scientific certainty.

* Pratigya (Proposition): "This patient has a Jvara (fever) caused by Vata."

* Hetu (Reason): "Because there is body ache and irregular temperature."

* Udaharana (Example): "Wherever there is Vata provocation, there is pain and irregularity, as seen in Vata-Vyadhi."

* Upanaya (Application): "This patient's pain and temperature patterns match the Vata profile."

* Nigamana (Conclusion): "Therefore, this fever is definitively Vata-derived."

This structured approach prevented medical errors and provided a "standard operating procedure" for physicians across the Indian subcontinent.

Causality: Karya-Karana Siddhanta

Nyaya philosophy insists that "nothing comes from nothing." Every effect (Karya) must have a cause (Karana). This principle transformed Ayurveda into a truly diagnostic science.

The physician's role is divided into three logical steps based on Nyaya

* Nidana (Etiology): Identifying the cause (e.g., poor diet).

* Purvarupa (Prodromal Symptoms): Identifying the early effects.

* Chikitsa (Treatment): Applying a "counter-cause" to neutralize the effect.

If a disease is the Karya (effect), the medicine is the new Karana (cause) introduced to bring the body back to a state of balance (Samyavastha).

The Development of Yukti (Applied Logic)

While Nyaya provided the foundation, Ayurveda added its own layer of brilliance: Yukti. The Caraka Samhita identifies Yukti as a special Pramana. It is the "intellect" that coordinates multiple causes to produce a desired effect.

In a clinical setting, a physician must consider:

- * Doshā: The biological humor.
- * Bala: The strength of the patient.
- * Kala: The season or time of day.
- * Anupana: The medium through which medicine is given.

The logical coordination of these moving parts is the highest application of Nyaya logic in the medical field. It is what we today call "clinical judgment."

Vada Vidhi: The Rules of Scientific Debate

Nyaya is famous for its "Art of Debate." Ayurveda adopted these rules to ensure that medical knowledge was constantly tested and updated. The Charaka Samhita (Vimana Sthana, Chapter 8) lists several Nyaya-based terms for medical discussion.

- * Siddhanta (Tenet): A truth established after multiple examinations.
- * Jalpa (Wrangling): Defending one's position by any means (discouraged in medicine).
- * Vitanda (Cavil): Merely attacking the opponent's view without offering a better one.
- * Vada (Constructive Discussion): Seeking the truth through logic (encouraged).

By forcing physicians to defend their findings in public assemblies (Sambhasha), the Nyaya influence ensured that only the most effective treatments survived.

Impact on Pharmacology (Dravya-Guna-Vigyana)

Nyaya classifies reality into categories like Dravya (substance), Guna (quality), and Karma (action). Ayurveda uses these exact categories to classify medicine:

- * Dravya: The herb (e.g., Ashwagandha).
- * Guna: Its qualities (e.g., heavy, oily).
- * Karma: Its action on the body (e.g., strengthening).

This classification system allowed Ayurveda to organize thousands of herbs into a logical database that a student could memorize and apply.

CONCLUSION

The impact of Nyaya Darshan on Ayurveda is the difference between a "healer" and a "scientist." Nyaya gave Ayurveda

- * Objectivity: The ability to observe the patient without bias.
- * Consistency: A logical framework that worked the same way for every doctor.
- * Intellectual Depth: A way to debate, refine, and prove medical theories.

Even today, as we look toward "Evidence-Based Medicine," we find that the roots of this evidence lie in the ancient logic of Nyaya. The synergy between these two systems created a

medical tradition that has lasted over 3,000 years, proving that when medicine is built on logic, it becomes timeless.

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