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AN ANALYTICAL EXPLORATION OF THE CONCEPT OF SHUKRA BAHULYAT PUMAN AS DESCRIBED IN AYURVEDA

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ABSTRACT

Since ancient times, parents have aspired to have healthy, intelligent, and attractive children, a desire reflected in classical *Ayurvedic* concepts such as *Suputrakamiya*. *Ayurveda*, the traditional system of Indian medicine, outlines simple and systematic approaches to promote the birth of a healthy child, beginning with appropriate partner selection and extending to factors influencing fetal development, including fertilization. It highlights the importance of *Shukra* (sperm) and *Shonita* (ovum) in conception, stating that predominance of *Shonita* results in female offspring, whereas dominance of *Shukra* leads to male offspring. In parallel, modern science explains sex determination through the presence of X and Y chromosomes, with the Y chromosome being decisive for male differentiation. Hormonal factors such as Anti-Müllerian Hormone (AMH) and testosterone further regulate the development of reproductive organs and secondary sexual characteristics. Thus, both Ayurveda and contemporary science offer significant perspectives on the genetic and biological mechanisms underlying human development.

KEYWORDS: *Shukra*, *Shonita*, *Puman*, *Stri*.

INTRODUCTION

The ancient Indian sages offered profound knowledge regarding the scientific understanding of the human body, much of which underlies modern scientific thought. *Ayurveda* explains

multiple aspects of fetal development and heredity, including the process of fertilization. According to *Ayurvedic* doctrine, two fundamental elements *Shukra* and *Shonita* play a central role in human development; these correspond to sperm and ovum in contemporary medical science and are essential for conception. Classical authorities such as *Acharya Charaka* and *Acharya Sushrutaa* acknowledged three categories of sex: *Puman* (male), *Stri* (female), and *Napunsaka* (intersex). *Charaka* explicitly described that predominance of *Shonita* at the time of conception results in a female offspring, whereas predominance of *Shukra* leads to the birth of a male child, a view similarly supported by *Sushruta*.

Maharshi Sushruta, in the third chapter of *Sharira Sthana*, described that predominance of *Shukra* (sperm) results in the development of a male fetus, predominance of *Artava* (ovum) leads to the development of a female fetus, and equal predominance of both gives rise to a eunuch (*Napunsaka*).

The pregnant woman in whom, milk appears first in her right breast, the right side of her abdomen is bigger, throbbing appear first in her right leg, whose desires (longings) are for things which bear names of masculine gender, who sees *Padma*, *Utpala*, *Kumuda*, *Amrataka* etc in her dream and which have names of masculine gender only, and whose face and colour are pleasant- should be understood as one giving birth to a son. She, who has features opposite of these as the one giving birth to a daughter. She whose flanks are depressed, her abdomen indrawn in its front and absence of features told earlier (of male and female child) should be understood as the one giving birth to a eunuch. She, whose abdomen has depression (deep furrow) in its centre and appears like *Droni* (water trough or a valley) should be understood as one giving birth to twins.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

Ayurved compendia, modern textbooks, research papers and articles related to this topic were extensively studied.

Ayurvedic Review

According to *Ayurveda, Garbha lingam* or sex is determined by the combination of *Shukra Dhatu* and *Artava*. The predominance of '*Shukra'* and '*Artava'*, particularly at the time of '*Shukra Artava Samyoga'* (time of fertilization), determines the sexuality according to Indian thoughts. *Acharyas Charaka* and *Sushrutaa* have recognized three different types of sex, namely, '*Puman'* (male), '*Stri'* (female) and '*Napunsaka'*. They have also mentioned the

factors that play a role behind these three states of sex. According to them, the predominance of *Shukra* leads to the formation of a male child, the predominance of *Artava* leads to the formation of a female child and their equality in strength leads to the formation of a *Napunsaka*. *Dalhana* has also explained the predominance of *Shukra* and *Artava*. He says that *Artava* is four times the quantity of *Shukra* but it is not so. The quantity of pure *Artava* situated in the uterus is responsible for fertilization. Occasionally, due to over-excitement, the quantity of ejaculated *Shukra* (sperm) may be more or due to physiological depression it may be less, which influences the relative amount of *Shukra* and *Artava*. Citing the opinions of others, he has mentioned that the functional potency of *Shukra* and *Artava* influences the formation of sex. *Sharangdhara* says that besides the role of *Shukra* and *Artava*, the will of God is responsible for the formation of sex.

MODERN REVIEW

The sex determination system is a biological system that regulates the development of sexual characteristics in an organism. The X chromosome is involved in the determination of sex and is also known as the allosome (sex chromosome). Another chromosome, called the 'Y' chromosome, is also involved in the sex determination process. In mammals, including humans, a normal female has two X chromosome, while a normal male has one X and one Y chromosome. Female gametes only carry the X chromosome, making females belong to the homozygotic sex. Male gametes can carry either the X or Y chromosome, classifying males as the heterozygotic sex.

- Shettles studied sperm cells to observe their differences. He theorized based on his observations is that Y-carrying sperm are lighter, smaller and have round heads.
- He also studied sperm in some rare cases where man had fathered either mostly male or mostly female children. In the cases where the man had mostly male kids, Shettles discovered that the man had far more Y- carrying sperm than X- carrying sperm.
- Correlation of Second Concept- The X and Y chromosomes in males act as homologous chromosomes during meiosis and pass into different gametes. Thus, males produce two types of gametes and are described as heterogametic i.e. (22+X) and (22+ Y) while the female which produces only one type of gamete is homogametic. Otto Schooner’s theory: It is examined in research when the right ovary ovulated ova will fertilize produces a male child as well as when left ovary ovulated ova will fertilize produces a female child. So left ovary ovulated ova is more potent than the right one.

DISCUSSION

knowledge given by ancient Indian sages is scientific and forms the foundation of many modern sciences. *Ayurvedic* texts clearly explain *Garbha Sharir*, which describes the development of the fetus inside the womb and is similar to modern embryology. *Garbha Sharir* is defined as the union of *Shukra* and *Shonita* along with *Atma*, which can be compared to the union of sperm and ovum in modern science. According to these texts, when *Shukra* is dominant, a male child is born; when *Shonita* is dominant, a female child is born; and when both are equal, the child is *Napunsaka*. *Shukra* and *Shonita* can be compared to sperm and ovum, where the sperm carries XY chromosomes and the ovum carries XX chromosomes.

In the 1960s, Landrum B. Shettles developed the Shettles method, a procedure for couples to use before and during intercourse to increase their chances of conceiving a fetus of their desired sex. Shettles observed physical differences between X-carrying sperm and Y-carrying sperm. He noticed that male-producing Y chromosomes were found in small, round-headed sperm (endosperm), while female-producing X chromosomes were found in large, oval-shaped sperm (gymnosperm). Shettles also found that most samples did not contain an equal number of both types of sperm. After checking the family history of the men who provided the sperm specimen, he found that men with a male-dominant family history had more round-headed endosperm, and those with a female-dominant family history had more oval-shaped gymnosperm. This led to the correlation of *Shukra bahulya* with Y-carrying sperms and *Artava bahulya* with X-carrying sperms.

Additionally, the Shettles method indicates that male sperm tend to swim more quickly in an alkaline environment like the cervix and uterus, while female sperm tend to survive longer in the acidic conditions of the vaginal canal. This experimental theory seems to justify the concept of the three Nadis in the vaginal canal.

CONCLUSION

Ayurveda, as a traditional science of life, explains the concept of sex determination in a way that is comparable to modern science. This reflects the advanced knowledge of embryology possessed by ancient scholars. Although modern medicine provides more detailed explanations using advanced technology, it can be understood that the *Acharyas* must have carried out careful observation and study to develop these principles. The close resemblance between *Ayurvedic* and modern views suggests that our ancestors had a strong understanding

of sex determination. In *Ayurveda*, *Shukra* is considered equivalent to sperm carrying the Y chromosome, while *Shonita* is understood to carry the X chromosome, a concept that also applies to the egg.

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