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A Review on Namarupa Vigyana and its Importance in Dravyaguna.

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Abstract: *Dravyaguna vigyana is the branch of Ayurveda that deals with the study of dravya. Naming the Dravya is very essential in order to identify, classify and differentiate a plant from the other. Naming a plant provides a means of communication and reference. Nomenclature of medicinal plants has been an integral part of Ayurveda since vedic period. Importance of namarupa vigyana is a basic need of practitioners to identify the exact drug or plant.*

Keywords: Dravyaguna, Namarupavigyana, Nomenclature, Identify, Naming

I. INTRODUCTION

Namarupa vigyana is a science that deals with the identification and classification of various entities, including diseases, medicinal plants and therapeutic processes. Namarupa vigyana is not only a naming and formulating science, but also a way to understand the interconnections of things in the universe. In ancient and medieval times, there was no system of morphological description of plants as done now days. This object, however was fulfiled by coining names and synonyms which indicate the salient features of plants. In old days, plants were like family members participating with the people mutually on occasions of joy and grief.

Acharyacharak has emphasized that the best physician should know proper identification of plants, administration of these plants according to exact place and times keeping in view the individual constitution.[1]

If drug is not identified properly by their name, form, properties and actions and improperly administered even if known, both conditions are responsible for complications.[2]

So identification of drug or a plant is one of the important factor in drug research and clinical research.

Relation between Nama and Rupa:-

Namarupa vigyana is a special branch of dravyaguna vigyana that exclusively deals with the study of Nama (various name) and Rupa (their forms). Acharya PV sharma says that the word namarupa vigyana can be interpreted in three ways namely.[3]

That by which names and forms of substances (Dravya) are known.

That which imparts knowledge of the forms (Rupagyana) of substances on the basis of names.

That which deals with proper correlation of names and forms so that the entity can be identified correctly.

The correct meaning followed by namarupa vigyanam is deals with characterization of medicinal plants on the basis of etymological derivation of names and synonym.

Nama denotes basonyms (Mukya Nama) as well as synonyms (Paryayas). Rupa is specific character (Swarupa) of the substance which includes morphology as well as properties and action (Gunakarma). Study of Nama and Rupa together of medicinal plants constitute the branch known as pharmacognosy which deals with identification of medicinal plants.

Nama rupa vigyana in Nighantus:

There is scattered knowledge about Nama rupa in Nighantus.

Dhanvantari Nighantu:

Dhanvantari Nighantu says names one or many are assigned to plants according to habital, form, colour, potency, taste, effect and efficacy etc. many synonyms indicate the original source of plants while some are reminiscent of the place of their trade or commercial transaction.

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Example: kasmiraka - kumkum
Kirata - kiratatikta
Dravidi – Ela
Malayaja – chandana
Madri – ativisha

Correlation of name and form is very important as without this one cannot identify the plant even if seeing it.[4]

Raj Nighantu:

Raja Narahari Pandita, the author of Raj Nighantu provides basis of Dravya namakarana.[5] He explains 7 important factors to be considered while naming a plant.

Sr. No.	Dravya Nama karana Adhar	Plants named on the basis of Significance	Dravya	Dravya synonyms with meaning
1.	Rudhi	The names which have been in us traditionally are called as Rudhi.	Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia) Vasa (Adathoda vasica Linn.)	Guduchi – well known potent drug Atarusha – very useful drug
2.	Prabhava	Named based on their common utility which is innate to that particular plants is termed as Prabhava.	Khadira (Acacia catechu L.f) Bakuchi (Psoralia corylifolia Linn.) Sharapunka (Tephrosia purpurea Linn.) Langhali (Gloriosa superba Linn.)	Kushtaghni -alleviate skin disorders. Shwitraghni – alleviate Shwitra. Pleehari – alleviate spleen disorders. Garbhanut- that which expels out the fetus.
3.	Deshokta	Named on their habitat or source from which they belong to	Chandana (Santalum album Linn.) Kumkuma (Crocus satiivus Linn.) Ela(Elettaria cardamomum Linn.)	Malayaja- grows in Malaya region i.e. wastern ghats. Kashmira- grows in Kashmir and Bahlika. Dravidi – grows in Kashmir
4.	Lanchana	Named based on their morphological signs	Aragwadha (Cassia fistula Linn.) Agastya (sesbania grandiflora Linn.) Apamarga (Achyranthes aspera Linn.) Ela (Elettaria cardamomum Linn.) Vidanga (Embelia ribes Burm.F)	Deerghaphala –that which bears long pods. Vakrapushpa- that which bears curved flowers. Kharamanjari- that which bears spinous inflorescence. Triputa – that which bears fruits with three surfaces Chitratandula – that which bears fruits with whitish patches
5.	Upama	Named based on the similes. The plant parts resembling the animals or other objects.	Ativisha (Aconitum Heterophyllum Linn.) Katuki (Picrorhiza kurrao Linn.)	Shrungi – horn like roots. Mastyashakala- the rhizome resembles the scales of fish. Kimshuka – flowers resemble parrots beak.

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			Palasha (Butea monosperma Linn.) Ashwagandha (Withania somnifera Linn.) Vasa (Adathoda vasica Linn.)	Varahakarni- leaves resemble pig's ear. Vajidanta- flowers resemble teeth of horse and Simhasya.
6.	Veerya	Named based on their Veerya.	Pippali (Piper longum Linn.) Shunti (Zingiber officinale Linn.) Udumbara (Ficus racemosus Roxb.) Bala (Sida cordifolia Linn.) Maricha (Piper nigrum Linn.)	Teekshna tandula- pungent fruits. Ushana –which is irritant Sheetavalkala –with bark as sita Sheeta – cold allaying Ushna – pungent
7.	Itarahwaya	Other names which do not belong to the above six categories	Lavana (Syzygium aromaticum) Jyotishmati (Celastrus paniculatus Linn.) Shatavari (Asparagus racemosus Willd.) Shatapushpa (Anethum sowa Linn.) Guggulu (Commiphora mukul) Jyotishmati (celastrus paniculatus Linn.)	Lavana – alleviates many disorders. Jyotishmati – Varee – one of the best drug. Shatahwa –bears numerous flowers. Pura – the best amongst gum resin. Panya – article of trade

Factors considered while giving names and synonyms to plants in Ayurveda[6, 7, 8, 9]

Sr. No.	Dravya Nama karana Adhar	Plants named on the basis of Significance	Dravya	Dravya synonyms with meaning
1.	Swarupa bhodhaka	Named based on the habit of the plant. Habit is the characteristic from in which plant species grows.[10]	Vata (Ficus benghalensis Linn.) Punarnava (Boerhavia diffusa Linn.) Prasarini (Paederia foetida Linn.) Eranda (Ricinus communis Linn.)	Nyagrodha – the fibers or prop roots descend from its branches to the earth. Punarnava – becoming young or new again Prasarini – that which spreads. Sheeghree and Vardhamana – that which grows and spreads fast.
2.	Avayava bhodhaka	Named based on the morphology of different parts of the plants. Patra – leaves	Bilva (Aegle marmelos Linn.) Kanchanara (Bauhinia purpurea Linn.) Khadira (Acacia catechu L.f) Karanja (Pongamia pinnata Linn.) Saptaparna (Alstonia scholaris	Triparni – trifoliate leaves Yugmapatra – bifid leaves Balapatra – small leaves Snigdhapatra –glossy leaves Saptaparni – seven leaves

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			L.R Br.)	
			Ikshu (saccharum officinarum Linn.)	Asipatra –leaves with sword like edges
			Shimshipa (Dalbergia sissoo Roxb.ex.Dc.)	Mandalapatraka – round shaped leaves
			Shatapushpa (Anethum sowa Linn.)	Shatapushpa – bears hundreds of flowers
		Pushpa – flowers	Bala (Sida cordifolia)	Peetapushpa- bears yellow flowers
			Ashoka (Saraca indica Roxb.)	Gucchapushapa – cluster of flowers
				Raktapushpa –red flowers
				Pindapusha – flowers in clusters
				Madhupushpa – sweetish flowers
				Kantakapahala – bears fruits that are spiny
			Dhatura (Datura metel Linn.)	Kathina phala –bears hard fruits
			Bilva (Aegle marmelos Linn.)	Shukaphala fruits resemble parrot
		Phala – fruits	Arka (Calotrpis procera R.br.)	Brihataphala – bears huge fruit
			Kushmanda (Benincasa hispida Thunb.)	Jantuphala – insects enter inside
			Udumbara (Ficus recemosus Roxb.)	Sadaphala – yields fruits throughout the year in all seasons
			Narikela (Cocos nucifera Linn.)	
				Indrayava – seeds resemble Yava
			Kutaja (Holarrhena antidysentrica Linn.)	Ekashteela – has single stony seed
			Patha (Cissampelos pareira Linn.)	Dantabeeja – Manibeeja- has seeds that resemble teeth or ruby
			Dadima (Punica granatum Linn.)	
		Beeja – seeds		Tribhandi – Trayastra – that which has triangular or 3 winged stem
			Trivrut (Operculina Turpethum Linn.)	Chakrangi – section of stem shows circular structure
			Guduchi (Tinospora cardigolia)	Kalashaka – blackish stem
		Kanda –stem	Kalashaka (Murraya koenigii Linn.)	Shatamuli –hundreds of succulent tuberous roots
			Satavari (Asperagus racemosus Willd.)	Suklakanda –whitish rhizome
			Ativisha (Aconitum	Tamramula – copper colored roots

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			heterophyllum Linn.)	Sugandhimula – aromatic roots
		Mula – root	Manjishta (Rubia Cordifolia Linn.)	Swarnaksheeri –bright yellow latex
			Sariva (Hemidesmus indicus L.R.Br.)	Hemadugdha – having golden latex
			Swarnaksheeri (Argemone maxicana Linn.)	Ksheerashukla – having whitish latex
			Udumbara (Ficus racemosa Roxb.)	Ksheeraparnaka- ksheera kanadaka - it has profuse latex in leaves and stem
		Ksheera – latex	Vidari (Pueraria tuberosa Willd.)	
			Arka (Calotropis procera R.br.	Shadagranthi – which has many nodes
				Shatagranthi – which has many nodes
			Vacha (Accorus calamus Linn.)	Granthiman – nodular stem
			Durva (Cynodon dactylon Pers.)	
		Granthi -nodes	Asthishrunkhala (Cissus quadrangularis Linn.)	Teekshnakantaka – has sharp spines
				Kantakari – kantakini- thorny
			Ingudi (Balanites aegyptica Linn.)	Gokantaka –Sthalakantaka – Swadukantaka- Bhakshakanta- Kantaphala – thorny
			Kantakari (Solanum indicum Linn.)	Vajrakantaka - Yugm
			Gokshura(Tribulus terrestris Linn.)	kantaka – vyaghranakha – with sharp twin spines
		Kantaka – thorns		Adhashalya – Spiny inflorescence which is pointed downwards
			Snuhi (Euphorbia nerifolia Linn.)	
				Saradruma- Raktasara – reddish heartwood
			Apamarga (Achyranthes aspera Linn.)	Nisara – pseudo –stem has no heartwood
				Peetasara – yellowish heartwood
			Khadira (Acacia catechu L.F.)	
			Kadali (Musa paradisiacal Linn.)	Dhavala – whitish bark
				Sheetavalkala – with cold bark
			Ankota (Alangium salvifolium L.F.)	Varatwacha – bark usefull for skin
		Sara – heartwood		
			Arjuna (Terminalia arjuna)	Kapiromaphala and Markati – legumes covered with stiff hairs like those of monkey
			Udumbara (Ficus glomerata Roxb.)	
			Nimba (Azadirachta indica A.	

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			Juss)	Hareetamanjari and bahumanjari – greenish and multiple inflorescence
		Valkala – bark	Kapikacchu (Mucuna prurita Linn.)	Shikhari – flowers at the terminal end of inflorescence
			Tulasi (Ocimum sanctum Linn.	Vruntakaphala – long petiole
		Roma – hairs		Vruntika – long flower stalk
			Apamarga (Achyranthes aspera Linn.)	Deerghavrunta – long petiole
		Manjari – inflorescence	Vartaki (Solanum melongena Linn.)	
			Neelini (Indigofera tinctoria Linn.)	
		Vrunta – stalks	Alaru (Alianthus excels Roxb.)	
3.	Guna bhodhaka	Based on the gunas.	Gunja (Abrus precatorius Linn.)	Gunja – fruits make sound
		Shabda- sound	Shyonaka (Oroxylum indicum L.Kurz.)	Nata –Kutannata and Tuntuka – fruits hang and dance with a sound
		Sparsha – texture	Parijata (Nyctanthus arbortristris Linn.)	Kharapatra – rough leaves
			Kantakari (Solanum indicum Linn.)	Dushparsha – difficult to touch because of thorns
		Rupa – appearance	Bakuchi (Psoralia corylifolia Linn.)	Suparna – beautiful leaves
			Arka (Calotropis procera R.Br.)	Roopika – good looking
			Padmaka (Prunus cerasoides D.Don.)	Charu – beautiful
		Rasa –taste	Gokshuru (Tribulus terestris Linn.)	Swadukantaka – Sweetish
			Amlika (Tamarindus indica Linn.)	Amlika – sour fruit
			Yashtimadhu (Glycyrrhiza glabra Linn.)	Madhuyashti –sweetish
			Vidarigandha (Pueraria tuberosa Wild.)	Swadukanda – sweetish tuber
		Gandha – smell	Ashwaghandha (withania somnifera Linn.)	Vajigandha and Ashwagandha – smell like that of horse Sugandhiphala – aromatic fruits

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			Bilva (Aegle marmelos) Sariva (Hemidesmus indica L.R.Br.) Agaru (Aquilaria agallocha Roxb.)	Sugandhimula – aromatic roots Sugandhi – aromatic tree Teekshnatandula – pungent fruit Snigdhaparni – leaves are glossy Rajarha – which is valuable
		Anyaguna - other qualities	Pippali (piper longum Linn.) Karanja (Pongamia pinnata Agaru (Aquilaria agallocha Roxb.) Shalaparni (Desmodium gangeticum DC.)	Soumya and Sthira – acts as rasayana and strengthens the body Sheeta – cooling potency Ushana – hot potency
		Veerya – potency	Bala (Sida cordifolia Linn.) Shunti (Zingiber officinale)	
4.	Prabhava bhodhaka	Named based on prabhava –effect	Shirisha (Albizia lebbek)	Vishaghna – which counteract the effects of poisons or toxins in the body
5.	Karma bhodhaka	Named based on action	Khadira (Acacia catechu L.F.) Ashwagandha (Withania sominifera Linn.) Vasa (Adathoda vasica Linn.) Arjuna (Terminalia arjuna Roxb.) Ativisha (Aconitum heterophyllum Linn.)	Kushaghni – use for leprosy Putrada – provides male progeny Kaphaha – kasaghni – use in respiratory disorders. Hridrogavairi – in use cardiac disorders and shwasaneshwara – use in dyspnea Shophapaha –it cures shopha
6.	Udbhava bhodhaka	Named based on utpatti –Yoni Rohana – Adhishtana -	Agaru (Aquilaria agallocha Lour.) Guduchi (Tinospora cardifolia Willd.) Agnimantha (Premna integrifolia Willd) Arjuna (Terminalia Arjuna Roxb.)	Mruganabhi and Krimija – a type of fungus Kandaruha and chinnaruha –it is generated from stem and when cut, it regenerates. Nadeyi –grows on river sides Nadisarja – which grows in vicinity of water strems
7.	Lokopayogi bhodhaka	Besed on usage	Khadira (Acacia catechu L.F.)	Yajniya , Gayatri – wood is regared as holy and used in

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			Guggulu (Commiphora mukul Hook.) Agaru (Aquilaria agallocha Roxb.) Vamsha (Bambusa bambos L.	sacrifices Devadhupa – use as incense in god's worship Vishwadhupakam – incense and perfume Karmara-venu –dhanu-drum-It is used for making bows
8.	Itihaasa prasiddha	Named base on the historical background	Ashwatha (ficus religiosa) Arjuna (Terminalia Arjuna Roxb.) Tulasi (Ocimum sanctum Linn.) Amalaki (Emblica officinalis Gaertn.)	Bodhivrksa – Gautama attained eulightenment under this tree Partha – used for heart diseases Devadundhubhi – have numerous spikes like trumpet Shivam – it is benifecial in all ways
9.	Prashathi bhodhaka	Named base on the appreciation	Tulasi (Ocimum sanctum Linn.) Agnimantha (Premna integrifolia Willd) Agaru (Aquilaria agallocha Lour.) Agastya (Sesbania grandiflora Linn.)	Mangalya – it is ues in many rituals Jayanti – it conquers many diseases. Rajarham – which is valuable Munidruma – it blossems at the time when the star Agastya appers in sky.
10.	Desha bhodhaka	Named base on the native or place	Pippali (Piper longum Linn.) Marich (Piper nigrum Linn.) Twak (Cinnamomum zeylanicum Breyn.) Kampillaka (Mallotus philippinensis Muell.) Amalaki (Emblica officinalis Gaertn.)	Magadhi – grows in Magadha desha Kalingaka – grows in kalinga desha Saihamalam – grows in saihal desha Kampillaka – grows in kampilla desha Korangakam – grows in koranga desha
11.	Kala bhodhaka	Named base on the period	Vibhieetaki (terminalia bellirica Gaertn.) Saptaparna (Alsonia scholaris Punarnava (Boerhavia diffusa Linn.)	Vasantha – grows in vasantha kala Sharada – grows in sharada kala Varshaketu – varshabu – grows in varsha kala
12.	Avayava sadrusha	Named base on the body parts	Panasa (Artocarpus heterophyllus Lam.) Aragwadha (Cassia fistula Linn.) Eranda (ricinus communis Linn.) Draksha (Vitis vinifera Linn.)	Amashayaphala – fruits resemble stomach Chaturangula – having four finger length fruit Gandharvahastha – palmately lobed leaf Gostanee – fruits resemble the udder

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Namarupa Vigyana as a source of controversy:

In the medieval period, a large number of synonyms accumulated which denoted more than one plant and this lost accuracy. A plant whose botanical identity is controversial is considered as Sandhigdha dravyas.

Few example for controversies:

Amruta is the synonym used for more than one plan like Guduchi (Tinospora cordifolia Willd.), Haritaki (Terminalia chebula) and Amalaki (Emblica officinalis Gaertn.)

Vijaya - Haritaki (Terminalia chebula), Bhanga (Cannabis sativum) and Vacha (Acorus calamus Linn.)

Samanga – Lajjalu (Mimosa pudica Linn.) and Manjishta (Rubia cordifolia Linn.)

Sadaphala – Narikela (Cocos nucifera Linn.) and Bilva (Agele marmelos L.)

Swadukantaka – Gokshura (Tribulus terestris Linn.) and Vikankata (Flacourtia indica BURM.)

Sutiktaka and Varatikta – Nimba (Azadirachta indica A. Juss) and Rohitaka (Tecomella undulate Seem.)

Amogha – Shyonaka (Oroxylum indicum L.) and Vidanga ((Embelia ribes Burm.)

Ananta – Sariva (Hemidesmus indicus L.) and Durva (Cynodon dactylon L.)

Rasala – Ikshu (Saccharum officinarum), Amra (Mangifera indica Linn.) and Draksha (Vitis vinifera Linn.)

Importance of namarupa vigyana:

Ancient physicians used to identify the plants based in their synonyms. As there was no scientific system of classification and nomenclature of plants, synonyms were the only tools. This nomenclature system has witnessed evolution since ages.

Earlier, during the vedic period, many plants were in use. There was no question of confusion. Most of the plants were named based on historical backgroung like, mahabala and muchakunda.[11] as they were the names of Gods. During samhita period also the names remained uncontroversial as very few names were used as synonyms.

Nighantu period marked revolutionary steps in the field of synonyms as the number of synonyms were increased significantly. Nighantus are the lexicons which are the glossaries of the classical texts. It is believed that, each of Bruhatrayee had separate Nighantu.[12] Earlier Nighantus contained only the names and synonyms whereas later ones contained the synonyms along with properties of those plants. Due to namarupa vigyana it made very easy to understand plant morphology even in the minute note. Namarupa vigyana not only help to identify the plant, but also to understand its habit, habitat, propagation, flowerin – fruiting seasons, availability, main action and rasapanchaka.

By Nama rupavigyana we can gain the knowledge of name features, properties and actions of drug. With the help of various synonyms of plants, one can know its prominent characters that are morphologhy i.e. Bheshajaswaroop and Pharmacology i.e. Bheshajaprayoga.[13]

II. CONCLUSION

The stability of namarupa vigyana can be possible in future only when “Authoritative lists” of accepted names are prepared and made widely available by an internationally recognized body. The study and knowledge of namarupavigyana is an important aspect in both Samhitas and Nighantus to Ayurveda Vaidyas. To conclude, I claim that the role of namarupa and plants are so very intimate that they are the two faces of the same coin.

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