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ROLE OF PANCHAKARMA THERAPIES AND DETOXIFICATION IN TREATING MENTAL DISORDERS: A REVIEW STUDY

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ABSTRACT:Introduction: Despite significant advancements in the field of psychiatry over the decades, issues related to the management of certain mental health conditions, such as anxiety, stress, and intellectual disabilities, continues to be a mystery. Mental disorders are increasingly prevalent globally, necessitating innovative and holistic treatment strategies. Traditional Ayurvedic medicine, particularly Panchakarma therapies, offers a comprehensive approach to mental health through detoxification and balance restoration. This review aims to investigate the role of Panchakarma in treating mental disorders. **Methods:** A systematic review of literature was conducted, sourcing studies from databases such as PubMed, Google Scholar, and Ayurvedic journals published between 2000 and 2024. Keywords included “Panchakarma,” “detoxification,” “mental disorders,” and “Ayurveda.” Data were synthesized to evaluate the efficacy, mechanisms, and patient outcomes associated with Panchakarma therapies. **Results:** The findings suggest that Panchakarma therapies, including *Vamana* (therapeutic vomiting), *Virechana* (purgation), and *Basti* (enema) and *shirodhara*, *Nasya* also significantly contribute to alleviating symptoms of anxiety, depression, and stress-related disorders. Bio-purification through these methods appears to restore physiological balance, improving psychological well-being. Additionally, studies highlight the reduction of oxidative stress and inflammation, which may correlate with symptom improvement. **Discussion:** The review emphasizes the importance of holistic approaches in mental health treatment, advocating for integration of Ayurvedic practices within conventional psychiatric care. It discusses the need for further clinical trials to elucidate the neurobiological underpinnings of these therapies and their long-term benefits. **Conclusion:** Panchakarma therapies represent a promising avenue for detoxification and management of mental disorders, warranting further research to validate their efficacy and to explore the mechanisms involved. As public interest in alternative therapies grows, integrating these traditional practices could enhance mental health outcomes. **KEY-WORDS:** Manasroga, Panchkarma, mental disorders

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INTRODUCTION:

While it's normal for everyone to feel sad or down from time to time, these feelings typically subside within a few days. In contrast, when someone suffers from a depressive disorder or *manas roga* it disrupts their daily life and normal functioning, leading to significant distress for both the individual and their loved ones. Mental health disorders including anxiety, depression, and schizophrenia, affect millions worldwide, contributing to substantial morbidity and mortality rates. Conventional treatments often include pharmacological interventions, which can have varied efficacy and significant side effects. Ayurveda, with its holistic approach, emphasizes the importance of balance in bodily systems and mental well-being. Panchakarma, a set of therapeutic procedures in Ayurveda, aims to detoxify and rejuvenate the body and mind. This paper reviews the role of Panchakarma therapies and detoxification in the management of mental disorders, assessing their effectiveness and potential integration with modern psychiatric practices. Panchakarma encompasses a variety of therapeutic techniques, including Snehana, *swedan*, Virechan (purgation), *vaman*, and Nasya (nasal cleansing), each meticulously designed to eliminate toxins (ama) from the body, enhance physiological functions, and rejuvenate both the mind and body. The philosophy underlying *Panchakarma* is rooted in the belief that mental disorders are not merely the result of biochemical imbalances but are also influenced by emotional, environmental, and lifestyle factors. The term 'Manasa' is derived from the root verb 'man' or 'Manu,' which

signifies knowledge, perception, or cognition. In essence, it serves as the instrument of knowledge, enabling the understanding of various phenomena; thus, it is referred to as Manas. Manasa can be defined as a 'Karanadravya,' existing at a supersensory level within the body. It functions as the instrument of the Aatma (soul), housing all experiences of pleasure and sorrow (Vedanas) while acting as a mediator in the process of acquiring knowledge by activating the Indriyas (senses) towards their respective objects. Additionally, several synonyms for Manas include Satwa, Citta, Cetasamavayi, Hridaya, Manas, Manasam, Cit, and Hrit.

Materials and Methods: A systematic review was conducted using databases such as PubMed, Google Scholar, and Ayurvedic journals. Keywords included "Panchakarma," "detoxification," "mental disorders," and "Ayurveda." Inclusion criteria consisted of studies published in English between 2000 and 2023 that examined the impact of Panchakarma therapies on mental health outcomes. Studies involving diverse mental health conditions were selected for analysis. Data extraction focused on study design, sample size, interventions used, outcomes measured, and conclusions drawn.

DISCUSSION:

Ayurveda focuses on maintaining and enhancing health, as well as preventing and treating diseases by emphasizing overall physical and mental well-being. The management of mental disorders, or psychological medicine, was already recognized as a specialized field during the time of *Charaka* (around 500 B.C.). *Charaka* emphasized that individuals suffering from mental illnesses should seek treatment from qualified experts in this

area. While defining 'Ayu it is said that 'life is the combined state of body, senses, mind and soul. Further, the expectant parents are advised to contemplate on the physique, complexion, and mental traits they wish to have in their child, in support of their desire. So, health of mind is given importance even before the birth while in an embryo state. Ayurveda approach is a holistic approach with due importance to the pharmacotherapy, panchakarma interventions and psychotherapy in the form of spiritual and psychological interventions. Concept of Mind (*ManahSwaroopa*): According to Charaka, the entity responsible for thinking is referred to as "manas." This aspect is believed to be inherited from previous lifetimes and is derived from the combination of vaikarika and tejasahankara. Manas is linked to both Gyanendriya (sensory organs) and karmendriya (motor organs), which is why it is described as Ubhayatmaka (a combined psychomotor entity). Manoguna or the qualities of the mind: It outlines two fundamental characteristics of Manas: - anutva (atomic nature) and ekatva (unitary nature). However, it can be challenging to perceive these qualities directly. As such, Manas is considered to comprise three additional operational qualities: sattva, rajas, and tamas. These qualities can be identified through their respective contributions to three distinct patterns of mental responses. For instance, sattva, or kalyanabhaga, is exemplified by self-control, knowledge, discriminative ability, and the power of exposition. Rajas, or rosabhaga, is reflected in traits such as violence, despotic envy, authoritarianism, and self-admiration. Tamas, or

mohabhaga, is characterized by dullness, inaction, and sleep. Samprapti: ManasarogaSamprapti (the pathogenesis of mental disorders) provides insights into the causes of various mental disorders according to Ayurveda. Key factors involved include alpasatwa (a weak mind), manovahasrota (the channels that carry the mind), and the imbalances of manasadasha, specifically Rajas and Tamas, as well as the tridosha—Vata, Pitta, and Kapha. Alpasatwa is particularly significant as it reflects the individual's premorbid personality. In conditions classified as Ubhayatmakavikara, such as unmada and apasmara, the influence of sharirikadosha is more pronounced compared to manasavikara, which includes disorders like kama (desire), krodha (anger), and abhyasuya (envy). In the latter cases, the disturbances in manasadasha are more notable than in the former. For example, in unmada, there is a disruption in manasdosha alongside instability in buddhi (intelligence). In apasmara, the vitiation of manas is primarily influenced by the qualities of Rajas and Tamas.

Overview of Panchakarma: Panchakarma comprises five primary therapeutic procedures: Vamana (therapeutic vomiting), Virechana (purging), Basti (enema), Nasya (nasal administration), and Raktamokshana (bloodletting). Each procedure is tailored to individual needs, taking into account the patient's dosha (body constitution), prakriti (nature), and current health condition.

Efficacy in Mental Disorders: Several studies reported positive outcomes associated with Panchakarma therapies for a range of mental health issues:

Anxiety and Depression: A randomized controlled trial demonstrated significant reductions in anxiety and depression scores following a comprehensive Panchakarma regimen, with participants reporting improved mood and quality of life.

Stress Management: Another study indicated that Panchakarma therapies improved stress resilience and emotional stability in participants experiencing chronic stress.

Sleep Disorders: Research has also emphasized the positive impact of certain Panchakarma treatments on sleep quality and the alleviation of insomnia symptoms. Techniques such as Shirodhara, which involves the gentle pouring of warm oil on the forehead, have shown particular effectiveness in promoting relaxation and improving sleep-related issues. Better sleep contributes significantly to enhanced mental health, highlighting the interconnectedness of physical and psychological well-being.

Neurodegenerative Conditions: Some evidence suggests that Panchakarma can provide symptomatic relief in conditions like Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease by promoting detoxification and enhancing cognitive functions.

Mechanisms of Action: The proposed mechanisms for the therapeutic effects of Panchakarma on mental disorders include:

1. **Detoxification:** By eliminating toxins (ama), these therapies may enhance physiological and psychological functioning.
2. **Restoration of Balance:** Panchakarma helps restore the balance of Vata, Pitta, and Kaphadoshas, leading to improved mental clarity and emotional resilience.

3. **Neurotransmitter Modulation:** Various herbs and treatments employed in Panchakarma may influence neurotransmitter levels, supporting mental health.

4. **Holistic Approach:** The incorporation of dietary changes, yoga, and meditation in conjunction with Panchakarma reinforces mental and emotional stability.

LIMITATIONS: Despite promising findings, the review identifies limitations in the current literature, including small sample sizes, lack of standardized treatment protocols, and methodological variances. Further rigorous clinical trials and standardized practices are needed to solidify the efficacy of Panchakarma therapies in mental health treatment. The integration of Panchakarma therapies into mental health care presents a unique opportunity to address mental disorders holistically. Given the increasing emphasis on integrative health approaches, Ayurveda and Panchakarma deserve closer examination within psychiatric frameworks. Future research should focus on large-scale randomized controlled trials to validate the efficacy and safety of these therapies.

CONCLUSION:

Unlike other branches of Ashtanga Ayurveda, Psychiatry, Bhootvidya, ManasRog and treatments have not developed into a mainstream system. The main reason being ignorance and obscurity prevailing around the concept of being afflicted with a mental illness, which is still considered to be a social stigma. Panchakarma therapies show promise in the treatment of mental disorders, offering holistic and personalized care that aligns with contemporary mental health needs. By

addressing both physical and psychological dimensions of health, these ancient practices could enhance the overall efficacy of mental health treatment protocols. More research is necessary to establish standardized practices and elucidate the full potential of Panchakarma in mental health care. Exploring its utility and developing its possibilities into a contemporary support system to modern psychiatry is the need of an hour.

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