

# PROMOTION OF HEALTH THROUGH BRAHMACHARYA: A LITERARY REVIEW

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## Abstract

**Introduction:** In today hazy scenario, many lifestyle diseases and other communicable, non-communicable disorders are common. This increasement of diseases mainly based on the change in daily life style, seasonal change and bad food habits. The other reason of increasement of diseases is low immunity power. In today time, the main cause of loss of immunity power are over indulge in sex, bad food habits, use of pesticide and over use of antibiotics. So, it is time to look over ancient technique to maintain or increase the immunity power and prevent the life style disorder. In ayurvedic text mainly Acharya Charka emphasize the concept of *Trayupsthambha* to maintain the body healthy. By proper use of *Aahar*, *Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*, we can maintain body healthy. In *Trayupsthambha* mainly focus on brahmacharya. Brahmacharya is avoidance of sexual activity in any circumstances. The other meaning of Brahmacharya is to follow the ultimate knowledge or to get the higher stage i.e. Moksha. **Result:** By preserving *Shukra Dhatu*, the *Oja Shakti* is increase which is ultimately immunity power of body. This increasement of immunity power can prevent various diseases. **Discussion and Conclusion:** If one follow *Brahmacharya* strictly can attain the higher level of health in all aspect i.e. physical, mental, social and spiritual.

**Key words** – *Brahmacharya*, immunity, *Trayupsthambha*, *Shukra*, *Oja*

## Introduction

Ayurveda says, health is the principle tool to achieve all the objects of pursuits viz *Dharma*, *Artha*, *Kama* and *Moksha*<sup>1</sup>. The health status primarily depends up on the equilibrium state of the *Tridosha Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*, *Triguna Sattva*, *Raja*, *Tamma*, *Agni*, *Dhatu*, *Mala*, *Prsanna Atma*, *Mana* and *Indriyas*<sup>2</sup>. World Health Organization describes that Health is the wellbeing of the Physical, Mental and Social facets which is mandatory to achieve, socio economic growth of an individual or particular population mainly relay up on these facets. Intern healthy status of all the facets depends up on proper following of the healthy life style, daily and seasonal regimen, *Sadvritta*, and *Aahar Vidhi* which are broadly described in ayurvedic text. In ayurvedic literature, to maintain health main focus on *Trayupsthambha* i.e. *Aahar*, *Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*<sup>3</sup>. These three are the sub pillar of the body. To maintain health and body; right use of these three sub-supports is necessary. Among these three, *Acharya* gives importance to *Brahmacharya*. It is very well discussed from the time of *Vedas*. *Brahmacharya* literally means to move on the path of *Brahma*. According to other

definition, avoidance of sexual activity by all pursuits i.e. physically, mentally and verbally in any conditions<sup>4</sup>. In *Manu Samriti Brahmacharya* described as an *Ashram Vyavastha* which is last for 25 years<sup>5</sup>. During this period students stay away from the home and teach about *Brahmacharya* and they were called *Brahmachari*. Acharya *Vagbhatt* described *Abrahmacharya* in place of *Brahmacharya* as sub pillar of life<sup>6</sup>. Here *Abrahmacharya* indicate the *Brahmacharya* in *Grihashtha Ashram* and intercourse only for progeny not for pleasure. In ancient literature *Brahmacharya* is described for both men and women. In *Manu Smriti*, it is mentioned that if a woman takes control her physical, mental and verbal activity and not avoid her husband then they get final beatitude easily and, in this stage, they are called 'Sadhvi'.

### Etymology of *Brahmacharya*

*Brahmacharya* is derived from two words *Brahma* which is derived from *Brit Dhatu* and its meaning is ultimate knowledge, to grow, ultimate reality and word *Charya* which is derived *Chara Gati Bhakshno* and its meaning is life style, to move and to follow.

### Historical Review of *Brahmacharya*

#### 1. *Veda*: -

In *Vedas Brahmacharya* is described in both context of lifestyle and stages of one life. In *Vedas*, *Brahmacharya* is defined that it is a helpful way to attaining the salvation. In *Atharveda* it is said that the gods have conquered death by *Brahmacharya*. The king of Gods, *Indra* has attained the higher status with the help of celibacy<sup>7</sup>.

#### 2. *Upnishad Kala*:

##### i. *Manduka Upnishad*:

In *Manduka Upnishad Brahmacharya* is described that with the help of *Brahamcharya* individual can attain atman i.e. Self.

##### ii. *Shandilya Upnishad*:

In *Shandilya Upnishad Brahmacharya* described under ten *Yamas* defining that it is avoidance of sexual activities in all place and in all states in body, mind and speech.

##### iii. *Chandogya Upnishad*: -

And those students who find that word of god through chastity, there is that heavenly country; theirs in whatever word they are, is freedom.

#### 3. *Samhita kala*

##### a) *Vasistha Samhita*:

In *Vasistha Samhita Brahmacharya* define that it is totally avoidance of all kind of sexual enjoyment in all places or all condition: physical, mentally, and verbally under any situation.

##### b) *Patanjali Yogsutra*:

In *Patanjali Yogsutra* it is described under five *Yamas*. Here *Brahmacharya* define that with the practice of *Brahmacharya* one can conserve the body energy or strength<sup>8</sup>.

c) *Charak Samhita*:

In *Charak Samhita Brahmacharya* described under *Trayupsthambha* (sub pillar of body). The three sub supports of life is food sleep and *Brahmacharya*. The body sustained right use of these three subs supports<sup>9</sup>.

d) *Vagbhata Samhita*:

In *Vagbhata Samhita Abrahamcharya* is described in place of *Brahmacharya* as sub pillar of body.

## 4. In smriti

1. *Manu Samriti*: -

In *Manu Samriti Brahmacharya* is described as an *Ashram Vyavstha* in four *Ashramas*.

2. In *Yagyvalka Samriti* eight indication are mentioned to follow the appropriate *Brahmacharya*.

**Importance of *Brahmacharya* in Present Day**

WHO says the health is a complete state of physical, mental and social well-being and not merely absence of disease or infirmity.<sup>10</sup>

The desire of sex is the greatest desire of human life. Sex desire or lust is the deep-rooted instinct in the man. Sex life without marriage is the only pleasure of senses. The excess desire of sex is affected the mind, body, intellect power, senses and the whole body. The excessive indulgence in sex is affected the person physical health as venerable diseases, AIDS, STD and mental health as defraud feelings like heartbroken and social health as children without father. In today scenario the man degraded himself to a great degree by excess indulgence in sex. The man lost his power of discrimination by more indulgence in sex. If a person wants to regain his proper health, his *Brahmic* glory, his divine power should follow the *Brahamcharya*. The man must know the benefits of *Brahmacharya* in both way as *Naishthik* and *Vyavahik Brahmacharya*<sup>11</sup>. He should follow the rule of *Brahmacharya* as a householder. The man completely transmuted his sex desire by divine thoughts and regular meditation. The transmutation of sex desire is very efficacious and satisfactory.

**Importance of *Brahmacharya* in Student Life**

The period of student life is a period of getting knowledge and education. In ancient literature specially *Manu Samriti* described *Brahmacharya* as an ashram *Vyavastha* which is last for 25 years. During this period the student is called *Brahmachari*<sup>12</sup>. During this period the student is stay away from his home with his guru and attain practical and spiritual knowledge.

But in today scenario the *Brahmacharya* is not found in student life. In today time the student does not teach about *Brahmacharya* and they have not knowledge of *Brahmacharya* and its importance. The self-control is unknown to a student in today time. Arrogance, disobedient are deep rooted in student. In ancient gurukul the student was healthy, long living, and strong. It appears in today time the health of student continuous deteriorated. If a student follows the *Brahmacharya* in student life he can attain: -

- A pure character
- Strength of the body
- A good discipline for whole life
- Ability to remember for a long time
- Complete purity of mind and body
- Abstinence
- A good confidence
- Righteous thoughts
- Peace of mind
- *Vichar shakti*: -it is the power of analysis.
- *Dharan shakti*: - it is the power of holding.
- Initiative power
- Vision power
- Intellectual

### ***Brahmacharya* for Women**

Women also should follow the *Brahmacharya*. They can observe both *Naishtaik* and *Grihastha Brahmacharya*. In *Naishtaik Brahmacharya* women devote themselves to the service and devotion of god like Mira Bai.

In *Atharveda* described that if a woman follows *Brahmacharya* she gets a suitable husband<sup>13</sup>.

In *Grihastha Brahmacharya* women should follow the *Pativrta Dharma* or take vow of chastity and should keep herself like Savitri. Various references are present in ancient ayurvedic literature for women *Brahmacharya*. In *Manu Smriti* mentioned that if a woman takes control her physical, mental and verbal activity and not avoid her husband then they get final beatitude easily and, in this stage, they called '*Sadhvi*'<sup>14</sup>.

In *Charaka Samhita* it was given that for a healthy child a woman should follow the *Brahmacharya* from the first day of menstruation, sleep on floor, take food in unbroken vessel, on fourth day take bath and approaches her husband with pleasant mind<sup>15</sup>.

### **Benefits of *Brahmacharya***

#### **1. Physical health**

With the help of *Brahmacharya* one can get the higher level of health. When one practices the *Brahmacharya* and control over his sense organ then his seminal fluid (*Veerya*) change into the *Oja*. When *Oja* shakti increase then the immunity power of the body also increases. Due to higher immunity power the diseases cannot harm the body. In ayurvedic literature it is said that *Oja* is the natural power of the body. Due to this the strength of the body also increases. When the immunity

power and the strength of the body is higher than the aging of a person delayed. In ayurvedic literature also described about physical health with the help of *Brahmacharya*.<sup>161718</sup>

## 2. Mental health

It is a state of balance between the individual the individual and surrounding world, a state of harmony between oneself and others. If a person controls his sense organ and wants to become a *Brahmachari*, the *Shukra Dhatu* moves upward to the heart and stored as *Oja Shakti*. Thereby the power of intellect, memory, will power, and understanding power becomes sharp and clear by continence<sup>19</sup>. The strict *Brahmachari* has sharp and long-lasting memory power. *Brahmacharya* also increase the power of concentration due to *Oja shakti* which is conserved by the preservation of the semen and its transmutation. The modern science also says that the cholesterol, phosphorus and lecithin and other constituents of nervous and brain tissue are the main constituents of the reproductive elements as well. The loss of these valuable nerve nourishing substances, by promoting undernutrition, is responsible for the nervous system and brain. If one avoids breaking *Brahmacharya*, then the same nutrients get used up in improving the mental powers because the same nutrients which could have been lost in momentary sensations of lust, are now available for creating new cell of brain and nervous system.

## 3. Social health

Social health is the ability to interact with people, respect yourself and others. One who has power of *Brahmacharya*, has a glamorous aura in his face. He can influence people by speaking few words. Due to pursuit of *Brahmacharya* one can get status symbol in the society as described 'Mahayasha' in ayurvedic literature<sup>20</sup>. One who follow the *Brahmacharya* the mind becomes pure and clear. Pure mind reduces the incidence of sexual harassment and rape in the society. Pure mind also helps to prevent distorted thinking which yield the healthy society. To create a prosperous nation positive energy is required and ultimately positive energy comes from following *Brahmacharya*.

## 4. Spiritual health: -

Spiritual health refers to that part of individual which reaches out and strives for meaning and purpose in life. The ultimate goal of life is *Prushartha Chatushtay*<sup>21</sup> (*Dharma, Artha, Kaama, Moksha*). To attain the *Prushartha Chatushtay* compulsory component is health and health is directly related to *Brahmacharya*. The last component of *Prushartha Chatushtay* is *Moksha* which is only attain by following the *Brahmacharya*. Also, in ayurvedic literature it is mentioned that with the help of *Brahmacharya* one can achieve the goal of life i.e. *Moksha*.<sup>22</sup>

With the help of *Brahmacharya* one can decrease pride, anger and bad thinking which leads to enlightenment (*Aataman Gyan*). Pure knowledge is attained through *Brahmacharya*, which does not wander attention towards worldly things and helps in attaining liberation. In *Atharveda* it is mentioned that god becomes immortal with the help of *Brahmacharya*<sup>23</sup>

## Discussion

In Ayurvedic text mainly Acharya Charaka emphasize the concept of *Tryupstambha* to maintain the body healthy. By proper use of *Aahar*, *Nidra* and *Brahmacharya*, we can maintain body healthy. In *Tryupstambha* mainly focus on *Brahmacharya*. *Brahmacharya* literally meaning to prevent the loss of *Shukra*. If a man preserves the *Shukra*, he can attain the highest state of health and also achieve the goal of life. When one follows the celibacy strictly can attain the all aspects of health i.e. physical, mental, social and spiritual. By preserving *Shukra*, it moves upward and stored in heart and all over body as *Oja* shakti. *Oja* shakti is the last product of *Shukra*. It is divided as *Para* and *Apara* Oja. The *Para Oja* stored in heart and its value is 8 Bindu. The *Apara Oja* is present in all over body and its value is *Ardha Anjali*. In today time *Oja Shakti* is compared with immunity power. So, by preserving *Shukra Dhatu*, increasement of *Oja Shakti* ultimately immunity power. If immunity power increase then the seasonal disorder and other infectious diseases do not harm the body and one can maintain the physical health. By following *Brahmacharya* mental, social and spiritual health also increase. In this context, the modern science also says that the cholesterol, phosphorus and lecithin and other constituents of nervous and brain tissue are the main constituents of the reproductive elements as well. The loss of these valuable nerve nourishing substances, by promoting undernutrition, is responsible for the nervous system and brain. If one avoids breaking *Brahmacharya*, then the same nutrients get used up in improving the mental powers because the same nutrients which could have been lost in momentary sensations of lust, are now available for creating new cell of brain and nervous system.

## Conclusion: -

If one follow *Brahmacharya* strictly can attain the higher level of health, all aspect of health i.e. physical, mental, social and spiritual and also can attain the highest state i.e. *Moksha*.

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