Review Article

Ayurveda Interpretation of Kalpana: A Classical Review

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Abstract

Kalpana (formulations) is a method or process of drug preparation and these specific formulations meant for particular purposes. The knowledge of drug preparation or Kalpana helps to enhancing potency and palatability of drug. The particular dosage forms and processing techniques employed for definite purposes. Charaka Samhita mentioned concept of Samskaras (fortifications) that helps to increase potency and qualities of drugs. Acharya Harita described different types of Kashaya (Saptavidha Kashaya); similarly other ayurveda texts also mentioned various types of classical Ayurveda formulations. Present article explored Ayurvedic interpretation of Kalpana and utility of this concept.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Kalpana, Saptavidha Kashaya, Drugs

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1. Introduction

Kalpana is ayurveda terminology used for various types of drugs preparation, this term also used for types of food preparation as Ahara Kalpana. The term Kalpana also explained by Ashtanga Hrudaya in Uttarakarshana. Processing of medicinal substances called as Bheshaja kalpa while Ahara kalpa indicates processing of food and management of body is called Kaya kalpa. The Ayurveda drugs prepared from various sources including materials obtained from plants, metals, minerals, and marine and animals products. (1-5) The consideration of concept of Kalpana helps to achieve best possible drug formulation in terms of efficacy, safety and palatability. The processing of plant materials as five basic methods is called Panchvidh kashaya kalpana that includes Swrasa, Kalka, Kwatha, Phanta and Hima. (4-6)

2. Principles of pharmaceutical processing (Bheshaja kalpa)

1. Paribhsha
2. Man
3. Panchavidha Kashaya kalpana
4. Ras, Guna, Virya, Vipaka and Prabhav
5. Anukta or Visheshokta

Panchavidha Kashaya Kalpana

Kashaya word can be used for extract, colour, cosmetic pastes and taste, etc. Svarasa, Kalka, Kashaya, Shita and Phanta, etc. Sushruta has mentioned six forms Kshíra, Rasa, Kalka, Kashaya, Shita and Chîrîna. Ashtang Samgraha mentioned other Kalpana like; Niryasa, Kalka, Niryáha, Shita and Phanta.

The major types of Kalpana as depicted in Figure 1 are Pradhanasya Kalpana, Pradhanena Kalpana, Guna Kalpana, Lesha Kalpana, Vidya Kalpana, Bhakshya Kalpana and Ajna Kalpana.
Figure 1. Various types of Kalpana as per Ayurveda

- **Pradhanasya Kalpana**
  This concept gives importance to the ingredient of compound that possesses superior and prominent properties among many substances of similar properties. Compound with *Prakrishi Guna* keeps as chief ingredient and formulation prepared accordingly.

- **Pradhanena Kalpana**
  Substances belongs from particular group designated based on the important or *Pradhan dravya*, for example substances related with milk termed as *Ksheera varga* since milk put on importance. *Ashtanga Hridaya* in *Dravadravya Vijnantiadhyaya* and *Annaswaroopa Vijnana Adhyaya*, etc. are explored concept of this *Kalpana*. In classical Ayurveda texts some *Aushadhi yoga* named on the basis of their property of being *Pradhanadravya*.

- **Guna Kalpana**
  These formulations are based on the concept of qualities since *Guna* indicates quality or attribute. *Kalpana* based on different qualities of an object is called *Guna Kalpana*. *Guna Kalpana* is related to the compounds which are attributes some *Karma* even though not included under that particular *Guna* group in Ayurveda.

- **Lesha Kalpana**
  *Lesha* used for small portion, here few topics not explored due to their hugeness and such topics elaborating as concise part under the heading of *Lesha Kalpana*. *Vagbhata* concisely described superiority of *Karshya* over *Sthoullya*; *Acharya Arunadatta* mentioned reasons for the same. Here it is mentioned that *Sthoullya* is difficult to treat due to *Virudhopkrama* as compared to *Karshya*.

- **Vidya Kalpana**
  Knowledge of other *Shastra* has been incorporated in the texts for understanding of specific subject. Rules of *Samaasa*, *Vibhakti – Pratyaya* explained for easy understanding of *Shloka*; *Nirukti* of different terminologies and *Nyaya* found in *Ashtanga Hrudyaya*. *Vidya Kalpana* focuses on the fact that one should be well versed with other associated sciences also.

- **Bhakshya Kalpana**
  This concept describes non eatable with the examples of *Bhakshya* i.e.; eatable. Similes are given to explain particular things. This is way of giving *‘Upama’* or *‘Drushtanta’*; explained by *Arunadatta*.

- **Ajna Kalpana**
  The *Ajna* means to direct, this includes special instructions provided by various *Acharya*, here it is explained that some rules of *Acharya* should be obeyed without questioning. These *aptaavachana* given by great sages called *Ajna Kalpana* which may or may not have particular reason behind them. This type of instructions can be considered as *Sadvrutta*.

### 3. Importance of Kalpana

- The concept of *Pradhanena Kalpana* play important role in the *Chikitsa*. *Agyra dravya* used for particular disease and can be used according to *Prakruti*, *desha*, *kala* and *bala* etc.
- *Guna Kalpana* helps to understand *Guna* or attributes other than the *Gurvadi Guna*.  

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**Note:** The diagram shows the various types of Kalpana as per Ayurveda, with a list of subtypes including Pradhanasya, Pradhanena, Guna, Lesha, Vidya, Bhakshya, and Ajna Kalpana. Each type is briefly described with key points and examples from classical Ayurveda texts.
Lesha Kalpana provides knowledge of hidden context and helps understand things which are not mentioned clearly in Ayurveda Samhita.

Vidya Kalpana explores knowledge of other subjects, since one should be aware about related allied subjects.

Ajna Kalpana is useful for understanding Sadvrutta and necessity to follow this.

Bhakshya Kalpana is way to explore Upama of eatable with non eatable.

Concept of Kalpana helps to understand knowledge of Samhita like Tantrayukti.

Kalpana tantraguna can be used to understand other treaties.

They serve as Adhyayana of any Shastra for their correct understating.

Vati and Churna comes under heading of solid dosage forms, Swaras, Kwatha, Hima and Phanta are infusion, respectively), Asava and Arishta used as liquid dosage forms while Kalka and Avaleha, etc. are used as semi-solid preparation. Swaras, Hima, Phanta, Kalka and Kwatha are used in fresh form due to their short shelf life. Asava, Avaleha and Arishta, etc. can be used for a year due to their prolonged stability. (6-10)

4. Conclusion

Kalpana means process of drug formulation and these specific formulations meant for particular purposes. The concept of Kalpana helps to enhancing potency and palatability of drug preparations. Acharya Harita described different types of Kashaya (Saptavidha Kashaya) while other ayurveda texts also mentioned different types of Ayurveda formulations. Processing of medicinal substances called as Bhashaja kalpa while Ahara kalpa indicates processing of food, the processing of plant materials as five basic methods; Panchvidh kashaya kalpana that includes Swrasa, Kalka, Kwatha, Phanta and Hima, etc.

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Conflict of Interest

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