



Conceptual And Clinical Evaluation Of Sattvavajaya Chikitsa In Manoavasada With Reference To Breast Cancer – A Qualitative Research

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Abstract: Ayurveda defines health as a balanced state of *Sharira*, *Indriya*, *Satva*, and *Atma*, highlighting the importance of mental well-being. *Manoavasada*, a *Manasika Vyadhi*, is increasingly observed in breast cancer patients due to psychological stress. *Charaka Samhita* states “*Vishado Rogavardhananam*,” indicating that depression aggravates disease conditions. *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa*, a form of *Trividha Chikitsa*, aims at controlling the mind through *Ahitebhyo Arthebhyo Manonigraha*. A clinical study was conducted on 30 breast cancer patients with symptoms of *Manoavasada*. *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* was administered for 15 days with a 15-day follow-up. The therapy included *Jnana*, *Buddhi*, *Manonigraha*, *Dhairya*, *Manoprasadana*, and *Atmavijnana*. Assessment was done using the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HDRS). Results showed significant improvement in depressed mood, *Chinta*, *Bhaya*, *Shoka*, and *Anidra*. The mean HDRS score reduced from 31.63 to 10.86 ($p < 0.001$). *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* is an effective non-pharmacological supportive therapy for improving mental health in breast cancer patients.

Index Terms - *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa*, *Manoavasada*, Breast Cancer, HDRS.

Introduction

Ayurveda, the traditional system of medicine, emphasizes both prevention and treatment through the classical principle “*Swasthasya Swasthya Rakshanam Aturasya Vikara Prashamanam*.” According to Ayurvedic philosophy, an individual is considered *Swastha* when there is equilibrium of *Dosha*, *Dhatu*, *Agni*, and proper functioning of *Shareera* and *Manas*. Thus, mental health plays an essential role in maintaining overall well-being.

Classical Ayurvedic texts describe diseases as *Shareerika*, *Manasika*, or *Ubhaya*. Among *Manasika Vyadhis*, conditions such as *Krodha*, *Bhaya*, *Shoka*, and *Vishada* are considered manifestations of disturbed mental states. *Manoavasada*, which corresponds to depressive states, is closely related to *Vishada*. Acharya Dalhana explains *Vishada* as *Chitta-Deha-Glani*, where mental fatigue predominates. Acharya Charaka also states “*Vishado Rogavardhananam*,” suggesting that depressive states aggravate physical diseases.

In the present era, psychological disorders are becoming increasingly common due to rapid lifestyle changes, social pressures, and chronic illnesses. Breast cancer is one of the most prevalent cancers among women worldwide. Although medical advancements have improved survival rates, the

diagnosis and treatment of breast cancer often led to significant psychological distress, including anxiety, fear, and depression.

From an Ayurvedic perspective, such disturbances may be understood as imbalance of *Rajas* and *Tamas*, leading to conditions like *Manoavasada*. Ayurveda proposes a unique therapeutic approach known as *Satvavajaya Chikitsa*, which focuses on strengthening the mind and controlling negative mental tendencies. *Acharya Charaka* defines *Satvavajaya* as “*Ahitebhyo Arthebhyo Manonigraha*,” meaning the restraint of the mind from unwholesome objects.

Unlike pharmacological therapies, *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* mainly involves psychological and behavioral interventions such as counselling, reassurance, meditation, and mental discipline. These methods help restore mental stability by strengthening *Satva* and regulating *Rajas* and *Tamas*.

Considering the psychological burden faced by breast cancer patients, the application of *Satvavajaya Chikitsa* may provide a supportive approach for managing *Manoavasada*. Therefore, the present study was undertaken to evaluate its effectiveness in breast cancer subjects experiencing depressive symptoms.

Materials and Methods

Study Design

Subjects of breast cancer with *Manoavasada* attending the OPD & IPD of Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya Hospital Hubli, under the age group 35yrs-65yrs are considered and subjected to *Satvavajaya Chikitsa*. Each subject was asked to attend the *Chikitsa* sessions twice a week. The therapy was conducted in a clean, calm, and separate room to ensure a conducive environment. A comprehensive questionnaire was specially designed for this study to assess the subjects thoroughly. Based on the detailed case history, an effort was made to identify the underlying cause of the condition, which was then explained to the subject during the counseling sessions. Following the principles of *Satvavajaya Chikitsa*, each subject was guided to analyse and understand the root cause of their condition, and personalized strategies were developed to help them overcome it.

Sample Size

Thirty subjects diagnosed with breast cancer and presenting symptoms of *Manoavasada* were selected for the study.

Inclusion Criteria

- Breast cancer patients aged 35–65 years
- Presence of symptoms suggestive of *Manoavasada*
- Willingness to participate in the study

Exclusion Criteria

- Terminal stage cancer
- Brain or lung carcinoma
- Severe psychiatric disorders

Intervention

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa was implemented through structured counselling sessions based on classical Ayurvedic principles:

Jnana

Patients were educated about the psychological effects of cancer and treatment-related stress.

Buddhi

Counselling sessions helped patients analyse their thought patterns and adopt rational thinking.

Manoprasadana

Relaxation techniques and breathing practices such as Anuloma-Viloma, Bhramari, and Sheetal Pranayama were practiced.

Manonigraha

Meditation and mindfulness techniques were used to regulate negative thoughts.

Dhairya

Patients were encouraged to develop emotional resilience and acceptance of their condition.

Atmavijnana

Self-reflection exercises helped patients identify inner strengths and develop positive coping strategies.

Duration of Study

- Treatment period: 15 days
- Follow-up period: 15 days
- Total duration: 1 month

Assessment Criteria

Severity of depression was assessed using the Hamilton Depression Rating Scale (HDRS) along with evaluation of symptoms such as Chinta, Bhaya, Shoka, and Nidra.

Results

The intervention demonstrated statistically highly significant improvement in various parameters.

Parameter	Improvement
Depressed mood	64.56%
Chinta	62.88%
Bhaya	58.62%
Shoka	62.72%
Nidra	54.30%
Relaxation state	78.17%

The mean HDRS score reduced from **31.63 before treatment to 13.63 after treatment and further to 10.86 after follow-up** ($p < 0.001$).

Overall therapeutic response:

- Marked improvement – 30%
- Moderate improvement – 43.3%
- Mild improvement – 20%
- No improvement – 6.67%

Discussion

Ayurveda emphasizes that mental health is an integral component of overall well-being. Disturbance in *Rajas* and *Tamas* leads to imbalance of the mind and results in disorders such as *Manoavasada*.

In breast cancer patients, psychological distress arises due to fear of death, body image disturbances, treatment side effects, and social or economic burdens. These factors act as *Agantuka Nidanas* that aggravate *Manasika Doshas*.

In the present study, the majority of patients were found to have *Avara Satva Bala*, which indicates lower mental resilience. Classical texts also mention that individuals with low *Satva* are more susceptible to mental disorders.

Sattvavajaya Chikitsa works by strengthening *Satva* and controlling negative mental tendencies. Techniques such as counseling, meditation, and breathing exercises help regulate *Prana Vata*, calm the mind, and reduce rumination.

The significant reduction in HDRS scores observed in this study suggests that *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* is comparable to modern psychotherapeutic approaches such as cognitive behavioral therapy and mindfulness practices.

Thus, *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* provides a holistic, non-pharmacological approach to improving mental health and quality of life in breast cancer patients.

Conclusion

The present study highlights the importance of *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* in managing *Manoavasada* among breast cancer patients. The therapy significantly improved depressive symptoms, sleep quality, emotional stability, and overall psychological well-being. By strengthening *Satva* and regulating *Rajas* and *Tamas*, *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* enhances mental resilience and quality of life.

Therefore, *Sattvavajaya Chikitsa* can be considered an effective psychotherapeutic modality in Ayurveda for managing *Manoavasada* associated with chronic illnesses such as breast cancer. Further large-scale clinical studies are recommended to validate these findings.

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