



Review Article

INTERPRETATIVE ASSESSMENT OF SMRITI W.S.R.TO MANA AND BUDDHI IN AYURVEDIC CLASSICAL TEXTS

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Article info

Article History:

Received: 29-09-2023

Accepted: 21-10-2023

Published: 10-11-2023

KEYWORDS:

Memory, *Smriti*,
Buddhi, *Mana*,
Medha.

ABSTRACT

According to WHO estimations, India has 2443 disability-adjusted life years (DALYs) per 10,000 people who suffer from mental health issues. Also, the prevalence of age-related memory impairment was 3.6% in people 40 years of age and older, and 7.1% in people 65 years of age and older. In this world of gadgets, human beings are habitual in using devices for a lot of their work. Due to this, they are not in a habit of concentrating and memorizing things. Therefore, with time the human population keeps on losing their memory power. Many experts suggest that mentally challenging activities may help people with memory problems. Practicing yoga has also shown various health benefits, including improving memory and thus preventing memory impairment and related disorders. Numerous cognitive processes, including long-term memory, mental equilibrium, focus and concentration, attention span, processing speed, alternation ability, delayed and intermediate recall, executive function, verbal retention, and cognitive assessments are all improved by *Yoga*.

INTRODUCTION

The sum of all of our memories is what enables us to build relationships, learn from the past, and adapt to new situations.^[1] The power or process of recalling prior information, experiences, perceptions, skills, and habits is known as the ability to recall past events.^[2] The capacity of the human memory to store and recall knowledge acquired through learning and experience.^[3] One of the core topics of cognitive psychology, the study of human memory has been the subject of science and philosophy for thousands of years.^[4] Throughout the workday, our minds are frequently buzzing with ideas. We have a tendency to become quickly sidetracked and the mind to remain confused. Stress causes memory loss and a lack of concentration in ourselves. The present moment cannot be felt or experienced at the time. From mild problems to major disorders that impair function and quality of life, memory issues can range. ^[5] People are being compelled to work under psychological pressure,

which has an impact on their own mental performance, as a result of rapid urbanization and industrialization. As a result, the person's memory and other cognitive abilities are negatively impacted.

Mental health significantly influences a person's well-being. The definition of health therefore includes the physical, mental, and spiritual domains because a healthy life requires the right complementary support of all these aspects. Additionally, it is said that a person is in perfect health if they have all of the following: *Sama Agni* (appropriate metabolism), *Sama Dhatu* (proportionate body organs and tissues), *Sama Kriya* (appropriate physiology), *Prasanna Atmendriya* (a contented soul with proper sense organ function), *Sama Dosha* (a well-balanced state of *Dosha*), and *Sama Agni*. ^[6] The WHO also describes health as "physical, mental, social, and spiritual well-being". ^[7] In the past two decades, interest in and research into mental health and mental diseases have increased.

The scientific community is concerned about memory-related problems because of the changes in lifestyle and surroundings. Humans must improve their mental health and learn to manage a variety of mental and psychophysical issues if they are to survive in this cutthroat environment. There is no perfect

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Quick Response Code	
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treatment using current conventional methods. Because of this, there is a need for secure and efficient methods to enhance memory learning and other mental abilities. The higher mental process that allows for the encoding, storing, and retrieval of information is called *Smriti* (memory). It has a significant impact on how *Buddhi* (intelligence) is perceived. *Smriti* is mostly related to *Manovyapar* and *Buddhi*. By concurrently stimulating the neurons involved in the original experience, it recreates previous experiences. *Mana* regulates the *Atma* and the exterior domain through multiple *Jyanandriyas* (sensory organs), which are crucial for the retention of memory. [8]

Smriti

Etymology of Smriti

The *Smriti* word is derived from the Sanskrit term 'Smri' and 'Ktin' suffix. The word *Smriti* is *Stree Shabda* derived from the Sanskrit root 'Smruthau' applying the *Dhatu* 'Smru' with the suffix 'lyut'. According to Monier Williams, the word 'Smara' is derived from 'Smr' *Dhatu* meaning memory, recollection, remembrance. [9]

Synonyms of Smriti

In Charaka Samhita, the word *Prajna* has been used which is synonymous with *Buddhi*.

Prajna has been stated to be of three subtypes *Dhi*, *Dhriti*, and *Smriti*.

Definitions of Smriti

- Chakrapani commentary on Charaka Samhita has commented on *Smriti* at various places

'स्मृतिः सर्वभावतत्त्वस्मरणम् । (Ch.Sh.-1/140 Chakra.)

The ability to recognize the basic nature of all matter is *Smriti*.

'स्मृतिः स्मरणज्ञानं, स्मृतिग्याज्ञानं स्मृतिशास्त्रज्ञं ज्ञानं गणितज्ञानं च । (Ch.Vi.-4/4 Chakra.)

While explaining the qualities of *Aptas*, *Smriti* is the term used to indicate prowess in *Shastras*. *Smriti* indicates an ability to recollect and to be well-versed in *Shastras* and to acquire mastery in higher sciences.

- According to *Dalhana*

'पुर्वानुभूतस्यार्थस्य स्मरणं स्मृतिः ।

Smriti is defined as the cognition of past experiences.

- According to the *Yoga Sutra*

'अनुभूतविषयसंप्रमोषः स्मृतिः । (Y. S. - 1/11)

Maintaining acquired cognitive abilities is *Smriti*.

- According to *Kanada*

आत्ममनसोः संयोगविशेषात् संस्कार स्मृतिः । (Vai. Su. - 9/2/6)

Smriti is the result of the exchanges on inner impulses brought about by the fusion of soul and mind experience.

- 'स्मृतिश्च ज्ञानोपलक्षणं, तेनानुभवागमोऽपि बोध्यः । (Madhu. Ma. Ni. - 21 / 1)

Smriti is acknowledged as one of cognizance's defining characteristics.

- 'स्मृतिमिति स्मृतिजनकं संस्कारः स्मरणेन हि तत्कारणं संस्कारोऽनुमीयते' । (Ch. Vi.- 4/8 Chakra.)

The meaning of the term *Smriti* was explained by Chakrapani in this context. So, it is clear that *Smritis* are recollection of experiences in the form of acquired knowledge. *Smriti* is not merely recollection but represents the entire process involved in the formation of memory capacity. [10]

Smriti in Ayurveda:

It is one of the major constituents of *Buddhi* according to various Acharyas (Ch. Sha.1/98). *Smriti* is mentioned as per two angles i.e., metaphysical basis (तत्त्व स्मृति हलं येन गत पुनरागत । - Ch.Sha. 1/150), and applied basis (स्मृथ्यपयो ह्यपस्मर).

If we conclude all these opinions, the term *Smriti* was used in the following meanings:

Capacity to store knowledge, and capacity to recall the past things. (स्मृति भुतार्थ विज्ञानं । Su.U.61/3; स्मृति स्मरण ज्ञानं । Ch. Vi.4/4 Chakrapani; स्मृति पुर्वनुभुतस्य अर्थस्य स्मरणं ।)

Ayurveda recognizes the significance of a healthy mind and its impact on physical well-being. The system of Ayurveda places a strong emphasis on maintaining mental balance and cognitive health. It acknowledges that memory and cognitive abilities are influenced by various factors, including the individual's *Dosha* (constitutional type), diet, lifestyle, and overall health.

Mana

Human beings are co-related to a tripod having three pillars - *Satva*, *Atma*, and *Sharira*. [11] Here *Satva* is a connecting link between *Atma* and *Sharira*, which is otherwise called *Mana*. Location of *Manas*: Almost all Acharyas indicate the seat of *Mana* either *Hridaya* or *Shira* or in between *Shira* and *Talu*. *Mana* is the entity that makes a man knowledgeable. [12] When *Mana* disconnects from the senses, knowledge cannot be grasped, but when *Mana* connects with the senses, knowledge can be transmitted to the *Atma*. [13] *Mana* is called *Ataindriya* because they are the means of sense perception. [14] *Manas* is called *Ubhayathmak* as it is a mediator between sense organs and motor organs. [15] The *Mano Arthas* as described by Charaka are *Chintya*, *Vicharya*, *Uhya*, *Dhyeya*, and *Sankalpa*. [16] *Chintya* refers to the recollecting or recalling *Chintana* of *Purva Anubhava*, or *Vicharana* of *Jnana*, which denotes the assessment of the merits or shortcomings of the perceived information.

Uhya is the debate to establish the probable reasoning after the *Guna Dosha Vicharana* of *Jnana* and *Dhyeya* helps in concentration and fixation of the fluctuating mind for *Yadartha Jnana*. After the four

primary stages, the mind establishes what to do and what to reject. These *Mano Arthas* have more potential through the *Karmas of Manas* such as *Indriyabhigraha* and *Swasyanigraha*.^[17] *Indriyabhigraha* refers to the control of *Indriyas* to perceive the *Hita Vishaya* and *Swasyanigraha* refers to the self-control of *Manas* by *Satwa Guna* and without *Raja* and *Tama Guna*.

Buddhi

- Concept of *Buddhi*

In the evolution of nature, the formation of elements started in order:

‘सर्वभूतानाम् कारणमकारणम् रजस्तमोलक्षणमष्टरूप मखिलस्य जगतः संभवहेतु...। (Su.Sh.1/3)

After the *Samyoga*, *Prakriti* loses its *Triguna Samyavastha* & also, and *Avyaktavastha* to release manifold *Trigunavaisamyayukta Tatvas*. Amongst these, *Mahat Tatva* is the first one, also referred to as *Buddhitatva*.

‘यदेतद्विस्रुतं बीजं प्रधानपुरुषात्मकम्। महत्त्वमिति प्रोक्तं बुद्धितत्वं तदुच्यते ॥ (San. Su - 2/13)

Charaka also says... ‘जायते बुद्धिरव्यक्ताद...’। (Ch.Sh.-1/66)

It is of three types depending upon the dominancy of *Trigunas* & and their functions differ accordingly hence is called *Buddhi*.

‘अव्यक्तस्य लिङ्गमिव लिङ्गं यस्य। ‘अध्वसायो बुद्धिः’ ॥ (San. Su - 2/13)

The term *Mahat* signifies the pervasive nature of *Buddhi Tatva*. *Buddhi* is eternal and not eternal both. It is the main psychological instrument. It is the principal organ that controls the two other internal organs '*Ahamkara* and *Manas*' and also the external sense organs. The importance of *Buddhi* can be proved because it directly brings about the experiences of the self while other senses transfer their experiences through the mediation of *Buddhi*.^[18]

Inter Relationship of *Buddhi*, *Medha*, and *Smriti*

Budhhi, *Medha*, and *Smriti* are the steps involved in the process of genesis of knowledge.^[19] One is incomplete without the rest. The process of recollection takes place properly only after the *Buddhi*, *Medha*, and *Smriti* unite. So, in this sense they are undifferentiated. For cognition sense objects unite with senses and senses with *Manas*.

Buddhi Vyapara (discrimination) follows just after it. *Buddhi* works on it by reasoning and logic and reacts accordingly. If there is no action to be taken then knowledge gained gets stored for further use. Retention of cognition takes place with the help of *Medha*.^[20] Due to any stimulant, those stored experience comes into mind. Recollection happens with the help of *Smriti*. Thus, in humans, if the knowledge or experiences are not encoded and retained properly then all the efforts of recalling would be in vain. So, *Smriti* needs systematic interpretation

and retention. In this way, *Smirti* produces when encoding, retention, and recollection of the experiences unites.^[21] In which *Buddhi* helps in encoding. *Medha* in retention and *Smriti* facilitate recollection. Thus, *Medha* is a broad term that comprises the mental faculties like *Buddhi* and *Smriti*, which are again interrelated with each other and accordingly, the *Medha* can be subdivided into the following faculties: *Viveka Shakti* (power of discrimination), *Grahana Shakti* (power of grasping), *Dharana Shakti* (power of retention), and *Smarana Shakti* (power of recollection).^[22]

DISCUSSION

Smriti is the higher mental process in which information is encoded, stored, and retrieved.^[23] It has a prominent role in the perception of buddhi (intelligence). *Smriti* is more related to *Buddhi* and *Manovyapaar*. It is the recreation of past experiences by the synchronous firing of neurons that were involved in the original experience. *Mana* plays an important role in the process of retention of knowledge and it also coordinates the external environment with the *Atma* through the different *Gyanendriyas* (sense organs).^[24]

Ayurvedic practices to support memory and cognitive health may include:

- **Diet:** Ayurveda suggests that a balanced diet that includes foods that are nourishing to the brain can help improve memory and cognitive function. This might include foods rich in antioxidants, healthy fats, and specific herbs and spices.
- **Herbal remedies:** Ayurvedic herbs like *Brahmi* (*Bacopa monnieri*), *Shankhpushpi* (*Convolvulus pluricaulis*), and *Ashwagandha* (*Withania somnifera*) are often used to support cognitive health and memory.
- **Meditation and Yoga:** These practices are believed to calm the mind and enhance concentration and memory. *Pranayama* (breathing exercises) and meditation techniques are used to improve mental clarity.
- **Lifestyle recommendations:** Ayurvedic lifestyle guidance includes practices like adequate sleep, regular exercise, and stress management to promote overall mental health and cognitive function.
- **Panchakarma:** Ayurvedic detoxification procedures, known as *Panchakarma*, are sometimes recommended to help remove toxins from the body, which is believed to improve mental clarity.

Acharyas has explained the methodology to attain knowledge. In contemporary science, memory is the process by which information is encoded, stored, and retrieved. Encoding allows information that is from the outside world to reach our senses in the form of

chemical and physical stimuli. We need to change the data so that it can be inserted into the encoding process at this initial stage. Storage is the other memory or process stage. It means we're preserving information for periods of time. Retrieving information which has been stored is one of the three processes. This process could have an impact on the attainment of knowledge, or *Jnana*.

In Ayurveda, "*Smriti*" refers to memory and cognitive functions, which are considered crucial for maintaining overall health and well-being. Ayurveda, the traditional system of medicine from India, recognizes the importance of mental health in maintaining physical health. As Ayurveda is a holistic system of medicine, individualized care is often recommended based on a person's unique constitution and health imbalances. Ayurveda has proven that personalized advice on maintaining and improving memory and cognitive health is based on an individual's specific needs and constitution.

CONCLUSION

Smriti in Ayurveda can conclude as:

- **Balancing Cognitive Functions:** Ayurveda emphasizes the balance of mental and cognitive functions as an essential component of good health. *Smriti*, or memory, plays a significant role in cognitive function, and its proper functioning is considered vital for overall wellness.
- **Mind-Body Connection:** Ayurveda believes in the strong connection between the mind and the body. An imbalance in *Smriti* can lead to physical and mental health issues, and Ayurvedic practices focus on restoring this balance to promote well-being.
- **Holistic Approach:** Ayurveda is a form of holistic medicine that focuses on both physical and mental health. It utilizes various methods, including lifestyle changes, dietary recommendations, herbs, meditation, and yoga, to maintain and enhance memory and cognitive functions.

Smriti in Ayurveda is a vital aspect of cognitive health, and Ayurvedic practices emphasize maintaining balance in this area to support overall well-being. The holistic and individualized approach of Ayurveda makes it a valuable system for addressing memory-related concerns and promoting mental health.

Acknowledgement

My special thanks to Dr. Shivakumar Harti, Associate Professor, Department of Swasthavritta, All India Institute of Ayurveda, New Delhi-76 for his great cooperation, immense help, and encouragement.

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Cite this article as:

Shilpa Shankarrao Walkikar, Sangeeta Mishra. Interpretative Assessment of Smriti w.s.r.to Mana and Buddhi in Ayurvedic Classical Texts. International Journal of Ayurveda and Pharma Research. 2023;11(10):53-57.

<https://doi.org/10.47070/ijapr.v11i10.3000>

Source of support: Nil, Conflict of interest: None Declared

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