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ISSN 2321 - 6328

## Review Article

### CRITICAL REVIEW ON PARAPHILIA: AN AYURVEDIC APPROACH

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Article Received on: 13/07/18 Accepted on: 21/08/18

**DOI: 10.7897/2321-6328.06486**

#### ABSTRACT

Paraphilia or pervasions are disorders of sexual stimuli deviated from normal sexuality having multi-factorial aetiologies. Often precipitate divergent behaviour involving aggression, victimization, and extreme one-sidedness. In this era of rapid demographic transition a large proportion of population has been victimized by persons with paraphilic impression prevailing around 59% globally. Unlike neurotic symptoms, paraphilic fantasies are obligatory to erotic arousal and may figuratively be ego-syntonic. Ayurveda emphasises that the responsiveness of impulse or stimuli is inevitably related to one's governing Kaya (personality). A slightest change in emotional perseverance (Mano-vishaya), unambiguously results in the act of sexual aggressiveness which is solely due to perverted Chitta (psyche). This slightest deviance which may alter the codes of conduct (Sadvrutta) can primarily result in a state of mind which is unable to distinguish the favourable and unfavourable objects of perception. A marked deviance from the normalcy of Mano Dosha (psychic humours), fallacious imbibition over Mano Artha and Vishaya (objects of psychic perception) are conceptualized to be an outcome for paraphilic aggression.

**Keywords:** Paraphilia, psyche, emotions, Kaya, Mano Dosha, Chitta.

#### INTRODUCTION

The complex pattern of interaction with diverse multi-factorial aggregation of one's sexuality, social bonding, emotional responsiveness, circumstances, cultural upbringing and status contribute to the sexual behaviour. An individual's sexuality is enmeshed with personality traits, his or her biological makeup and a general sense of self.<sup>1</sup> It is the reflection of perception of being a man or a woman in the developmental paradigm of adulthood. Sexuality encompasses all those thoughts, feeling, and behaviour connected with sexual gratification and reproduction, including the attraction of one person to another.<sup>2</sup> To describe a deviant from normalcy with evident aberration of personality, development as well as sexual functioning, Freud coined the term psychosexual.<sup>3</sup> In these factors, sexual behaviour is an amalgam of both psychological and physiological response to internal and external stimuli.<sup>4</sup> Paraphilia are deviant, repetitive, highly arousal sexual fantasies and behaviour which are often presented with psychiatric co morbidity.<sup>5</sup> Sigmund Freud originally described pervasion as comprising distorted sexual aim, object and behaviour.<sup>6</sup>

Ayurveda describes Prakriti (personality) as Swabhava (character) ie; Akaryavastha (unaltered) or Satmyavastha (equilibrium) of Triguna (attributes of mind). The personality has been described according to their mental disposition as Satvika (purity and goodness), Rajasika (passion) and Tamasika Kaya (inertia and insensitivity).<sup>7</sup> Further an in equilibrium with the Triguna may figuratively contribute to the action and behaviour, which are emotionally obligatory rather than logically elective. Individuals inculcating themselves into uncontrolled emotions (Vega) thereby express their attitude of aggression and dominance which may victimize subjects to

unusual sexual abuse and mental trauma. The practice of Sadvrutta (codes and conduct) mentioned in Indriyopakramaniya Adhyaya, Charaka Samhita clearly defines that the codes and conducts described are not only for physical conscience, but also for psychic judgement. Due to immense prohibition of Mano Vishaya (psychic perception), the sexual idiom of erotic paraphilic fantasies contribute to the underlying pathology of eccentric expression of sexuality (Kaama)<sup>8</sup>. The fragmentation of mind in accordance with Indriya Sapeksha Vishaya (sensory perception) and Indriya Nirapeksha Vishaya (psychic perception) contribute to its respective Bhava(emotional response).<sup>9</sup> When specific Bhava overpowers the other, it leads to an outbreak of invalid or faulty expression consecutively leads to Vikara (disorders)of Manasika ( psychiatric)origin.

#### CONCEPT OF PARAPHILIA

##### Causes of Paraphilia

Ayurveda describes the functions of mind as primarily Indriyaabhigraha and secondarily Swasyanigraha (attachment and detachment of sensory instances).<sup>10</sup> Chakrapani the commentator of Charaka Samhita, depict the improper Karma as 'Anistavishaya' (improper codes and conducts) which when incorporated, the mind itself is capable of controlling and distracting as Satva Guna (attribute) of mind always tend to be in its purest form.<sup>11</sup> Dhriti (intellect) is designated to comprehend and eliminate a person's perspective on favourable and unfavourable object of perception respectively. With an unproductive implication of Artha (objects), Vishaya Pravana Chitta (ability to discriminate) is impaired resulting in unwholesome behaviour and action.<sup>12</sup> While mentioning the functions of Vayu, Acharya has explained (Vayu) Niyanta

Praneta Cha Manasa; (that which controls desire) which implies that the Chanchalatwa (irregular flow) of Manas is due to influence of Vayu.<sup>13</sup> And further this Chanchalatwa is wholly or partially responsible for the mind to be not able to control or persist on a specific Artha or Karma. This in turn competes to non-regularize the balanced distribution of Satva- rajo and Tamo Guna. Thus the predominance of any among these deliberately results in a change or addition of attributes pertaining to a different Kaya or personality.

The direction of sexual drive outside the normal is termed sexual deviation which is regarded as problematic and often involve in engaging with individuals without their consent contributing to a criminal outcome.<sup>14</sup> The development of concept of paraphilia was based on the deviation (para) and the attraction to the deviation (philia).<sup>15</sup> Freud originally postulated that neuroses and perversions were inversely related, with neuroses representing symbolic displacement from perverse fixations, whereas perversions were direct expressions of pre-oedipal psychosexual fixations.<sup>16</sup> The structure of pervasiveness is often derived from the traumatic experiences of pre-oedipal period which is later precipitated as aggressive sexual fantasies.<sup>16</sup> These are never original creations but are stereotypical and constricting solutions to intrapsychic problems which limit ego development.<sup>16</sup> Since the fantasizing of paraphilic interests begins at an early age and because personal fantasies and thoughts are not shared with others, the use and misuse of paraphilic fantasies and urges continue to be uninhibited until late in life.

#### Paraphilia as a psychic comorbidity

The description of Pashava Kaya (a personality trait) gives a specifier as in the mentioned personality exhibits forbidden disposition, compromised intellect, malevolence to codes and conducts with excessive sexual aggressiveness and abnormal sleep habits.<sup>7</sup> The mentioned Kaya thus fulfils most of the anticipated exhibition of paraphilic aggressiveness. The fact that Graha (un natural cessation) possesses a body for the fulfilment of its three desires namely Himsa; here it may be correlated as violent sexual behaviour as in Bondage Dominance Sadism and Masochism, Rati; literally meaning sexual gratification whereas in this context of paraphilia it may be the gratification with exhibitionism, voyeurism etc. and Abyarchana which depicts taking benefits out of a victim for any pace of self-satisfaction as seen in paedophilia, sexual dominance, preference of objects etc. can also be regarded as an outcome with which the personality be impaired in a long run.<sup>17</sup> It is also mentioned that Prajnaparadha (intellectual blasphemy) is the prime cause for the entire psychic disposition.<sup>18</sup> Even though knowing that these erotic aggressions, like exhibitionism, masochism are some way or the other not relating to normal sexuality, the individual may not be able to liberate himself from the spontaneity in sexual impulse due to Prajnaparadha. With an improper analysis, there occurs improper judgement which in turn results in improper behaviour and act. Here the initial phase of analysis is emphasised by Chintya (internal perception) and

Vicharya (analysing right and wrong), the judgement by Uhya (logical reasoning) and Dhyeya (attention) and finally the behaviour is ascertained particularly by Sankalpa (determination of choice).<sup>8</sup> When mind fails to function at the level of Indriyaabhigraha (appropriate sensory attachment) and Svasyanigaraha (inappropriate sensory detachment), further neuro-cognition is impaired which makes it difficult to distinguish favourable sexuality and unfavourable sexuality i.e.; at the level of Chintya, Vicharya and Uhya itself lies the abnormality of psychic perception. As it continues to imbibe itself on acts of aggression to satisfy the sexual drive, the person develops an addiction which he might find difficult to get rid of. Another aspect of co morbidity is along with addiction and dependence of substance abuse (especially Madatyaya). In the context of stages of Mada (acute intoxication), Acharya has mentioned 'Vishayeshu Cha Akshamah', which means the individual finds himself unable to pertain over a specific Vishaya. Here the Vishaya can be both Indriya Vishaya (sensory perception) and Mano Vishaya (psychic perception), thus prevails the contribution of substance abuse in deranging the perspective of individual on sexuality.<sup>19</sup> For example; an acute intoxicated individual may victimize a submissive partner on an aggressive act or may deviate himself from usual sexual preference due to the improper indulgence of sensory and psychic faculty.

A dynamic organization within the individual of those psychophysical systems that determine his/her unique adjustment to his/her environment is termed personality. The syntax "within the individual" means that personality is what lies behind the specific individual's act. From the structural standpoint, personality can be decomposed into temperament, character, and psyche where temperament involves basic emotions, character involves rational concepts about self and interpersonal relations, and the psyche involves intuitive self-awareness and intelligence.<sup>20</sup> Inter personal exploitation, exhibitionism, excessive need for admiration and acclaim are seen in narcissistic personality disorder also which may be a co morbidity for paraphilic predisposition.<sup>21</sup> Paraphilia may emerge as a consequence of subsequent brain damage, trauma, epilepsy or chronic substance abuse.<sup>22</sup> The idea that a brain abnormality diminishes the individual's control over pre-existing paraphilic impulses that it releases impulses otherwise repressed.<sup>22</sup> Thus an evident psychological as well as biological predisposition may influence the so called cognitive, affective and experimental development. Addictive interaction is a term used to describe the co morbidity of substance abuse which may reinforce or amplify the act of aggression seen in pervasive sexual fantasies such as using alcohol to disinhibit for specific high-risk sex or combining the hyperventilation of tobacco smoke and compulsive masturbation.<sup>23</sup>

#### PARAPHILIA AS A SYMPTOM

The symptoms prevailing to paraphilia and its Ayurvedic understanding has been enlisted in Table 1.

TABLE 1: PROBABLE AYURVEDIC UNDERSTANDING ON SYMPTOMS RELATED TO PARAPHILIA

| PERVASIVE SEXUAL SYMPTOMS   | PROBABLE AYURVEDIC UNDERSTANDING                 |
|---|--|
| Fantasy (fetishism, masochism, anal sex, paraphilia NOS)                            | Himsa  |
| Seductive role sex  | Rati   |
| Voyeuristic sex (visual arousal)  | Chakshurindriya Atiyoga                          |
| Paying for sex (purchase for sexual service)  | Abhyarchana                                      |
| Trading sex (for financial gratification)   | Lobha  |
| Intrusive sex (no boundary, excessive masturbation, compulsive addictive sexuality) | Atatwabhinivesha, Maidhuna Param in Pashava Kaya |
| Pain exchange sex (sadistic) Narcissistic   | Himsa, Jugupsida Achara in Pashava Kaya          |

## PARAPHILIA PROGRESSING TO SEXUAL ADDICTION

Acharya while explaining about Dharaniya Vega (controllable urges) has mentioned Raga (desire). Here the Raga can be considered as both physical and emotional desires. Chakrapani, has commented on this as 'Uchita Eva Vishaye Punah Punah Pravathana Eccha' which means on excessive addiction to a particular desire it may precipitate as compulsion.<sup>24</sup> On the context of Atavabhinivesha also Acharya has mentioned the improper utility of intelligence may result in behaviour which maybe opportune or inopportune to a particular individual, which in turn may develop as an obsession to certain sexual gratification (Atiraga).<sup>25</sup> Thus excessive desire with in appropriate utility of Mano Vishaya at the level of Chintya, Vicharya and Uhya can be a prime factor for the conditions involving Rajo-moha Avruta Mana (sexual addictive compulsions)<sup>8</sup>.

The result of the mentioned paraphilic aggression is drastically related to sexual addiction. The incidence presented with a one-time event may precipitate as a moral lapse which with an ongoing deeper pattern reveals as sexual compulsion. These deeper patterns may emerge in diversified forms, including compulsive masturbation, compulsive prostitution, cybersex, and affairs. They may extend to include exhibitionism, voyeurism, and criminal sexual misconduct. Thus the pattern may be collaged by hierarchies of preferences (paedophiles), situation, combination of acts (Bondage Dominance Sadism and Masochism) and opportunity (rape without consent). Onset of sex addiction also appears to be triggered by stressful events. They exhibit an extreme ability to compartmentalize and to dissociate from reality, which becomes incorporated into addictive behaviour as part of escapism.<sup>23</sup>

## CONCLUSION

An individual's sexuality is based on how he values his preferences in terms of gender, object and his sexual appetite. Because of the social stigma frequently associated with the paraphilia, many people with sexual deviations go to extraordinary lengths to conceal their circumstances. On a conclusion a negative mind can never give a positive life. There is a drive for transcendence that is implicit in even the most sensual of desires. Sexuality and preferences within the dimension of normalcy can give more of a psychic gratification rather than the sensual pleasure by aggressive fantasies.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I formally share my heartfelt gratitude towards our beloved principal Dr. Prasanna N Rao, Shri Dharmasthala Manjunateshwara College of Ayurveda and Hospitals Hassan, for providing an excellence in academic purview and a platform for excelling professional virtue.

I express my sincere gratitude towards Dr. Savitha H.P, Associate Professor, Department of Manovijana avum Manasaroga, Shri Dharmasthala Manjunateshwara College of Ayurveda and Hospitals Hassan for her support and guidance

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**Cite this article as:**

A.Lakshmi *et al.* Critical review on paraphilia: An Ayurvedic approach. J Biol Sci Opin 2018; 6(4):75-78.  
<http://dx.doi.org/10.7897/2321-6328.06486>

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

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