

FROM STUDY TO DISCOURSE: EDUCATIONAL INSIGHTS FROM CHARAKA'S  
TRIVIDHA JNAYOPAYA

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## ABSTRACT

The *Ayurvedic Samhitās* not only serve as medical compendia but also as valuable sources on teaching and learning methodologies. They emphasize that the acquisition and transmission of knowledge should be systematic, disciplined, and ethically grounded. The concept of *Trividh Jñānopāya*—*Adhyayana* (self-study and repeated recitation of texts), *Adhyāpana* (teaching and dissemination of knowledge), and *Tarka* (critical reasoning and debate)—provides the threefold means for attaining true understanding. Complementary to this, *Adhyayan Vidhi* prescribes the proper conduct of study, including discipline, dedication, respect for the teacher, and continuous practice. *Adhyāpana* highlights the teacher's role in guiding students through explanation, clarification, and contextual application of knowledge. Furthermore, the method of *Tattvidha Sambhāṣā* (fourfold scientific discourse—*śaiśaya*, *pūrvapakṣa*, *uttarapakṣa*, and *nirṇaya*) fosters analytical thinking, dialectical reasoning, and clarity in interpretation. Collectively, these methodologies represent a holistic educational framework that balances memorization, rational inquiry, experiential learning, and ethical teacher–student interaction. The pedagogical principles preserved in the *Samhitās* remain relevant for modern education, offering a structured and comprehensive model for cultivating intellectual, practical, and moral excellence.

**KEYWORDS**- *Ayurvedic Samhitās*, *Trividh Jnayopaya* (*Adhyayana*, *Adhyāpana*, *Tarka*), *Adhyayan Vidhi*, *Tattvidha Sambhāṣā*.

## INTRODUCTION

तत्रोपायाननुव्याख्यास्यामः- अध्ययनम्, अध्यापनं,  
तद्विद्यसम्भाषा चेत्युपायाः||Ch.Vi.8/6||

From the very beginning of human civilization, mankind has been striving to acquire information and transform it into knowledge. In this pursuit, it is essential to acknowledge with deep gratitude the profound contributions of the ancient sage *Acharya Charaka*, whose dedication, intellectual efforts, and commitment to the science of life (*Ayurveda*) remain unparalleled. Among his remarkable works, the *Vimānasthāna* (the section dealing with specific measures), particularly the chapter *Roga-Bhishak-Jitiya Adhyaya*, holds a special place.

Here, *Acharya Charaka* outlines the systematic framework for learning through *Trividha Jñānopāya*—namely

- (1) *Adhyayana* (study and learning),
- (2) *Adhyāpana* (teaching)
- (3) *Sambhāṣā Vidhi* (discussion or dialogue).

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To explore the concept of *Trividha Jñānopāya* as described by *Ācārya Charaka*.
2. To gain a clear understanding of the significance and application of *Trividha Jñānopāya*.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The present study is based on a literary review, with primary reference to the *Charaka Samhitā*, particularly the *Vimānasthāna*. Additional information was gathered from other Ayurvedic classics, relevant commentaries, and contemporary literature. Among these, the *Charaka Samhitā* along with its available commentaries served as the principal source for analysis.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

*Acharya Charaka*, in the eighth chapter of *Vimānasthāna*<sup>[1]</sup> of *Charaka Samhitā* titled *Roga-Bhishak-Jitiya Adhyāya*, presents what is often regarded as a “*Kośāgāra*” (treasure house) of knowledge. This chapter is highly valued as it outlines a systematic framework for learning methodology, which *Acharya Charaka* conceptualized as the *Trividha Jñānopāya*—the threefold means of acquiring knowledge. These are:

1. *Adhyayana* (Study/Learning)
2. *Adhyāpana* (Teaching/Instruction)
3. *Sambhāṣā Vidhi* (Discussion/Dialogical exchange)

### 1. *Adhyayana* (Study/Learning)<sup>[2]</sup>

*Adhyayana* refers to the disciplined process of studying the texts under the guidance of a teacher or through self-reading. According to Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary, *Adhyayana* literally means "reading, studying—especially of the *Vedas*," and also denotes the spiritual merit obtained through study. In the Ayurvedic context, *Adhyayana* involves attentive listening to the teacher's words, recitation of *sūtras*, and repeated revision for retention.

*Charaka* prescribes that a student should maintain sound health (*swasthya*) and make use of appropriate moments (*kr̥takṣaṇa*) for study. The ideal time is early morning (*prātaḥkāla* or *upayaṣa kāla*). The student is instructed to complete daily purificatory routines (*śauca karma*), followed by *snāna* (bath), *sandhyāvandana*, *ācamana* (ritual sipping of water), and prayers (*namaskāra*) offered to deities, sages, cows, *brāhmaṇas*, preceptors, elders, and accomplished teachers. Thereafter, seated in a clean and comfortable place, the learner should recite the *sūtras* clearly, with full concentration, repeating them multiple times until they are firmly memorized. During this process, self-assessment should also be performed to identify personal limitations (*doṣas* or *lacunae*) in understanding, which must be rectified. Study, according to *Charaka*, is not restricted to a particular time but should be pursued consistently during morning, midday, evening, or night, depending on opportunity.

### 2. *Adhyāpana* (Teaching/Instruction)<sup>[3]</sup>

The second component, *Adhyāpana*, is the process of teaching or imparting knowledge. As mentioned in *Śabda Kalpadruma*, *Adhyāpana* denotes both the reading of texts and the act of instruction. Monier-Williams defines it as "instruction or lecturing." Within the Ayurvedic pedagogical framework, *Adhyāpana* represents the teacher's responsibility of transmitting knowledge to the students in a structured, clear, and contextual manner. It is considered a form of *vidyādāna* (donation of knowledge), which is regarded as a noble and virtuous act. Here, the teacher explains the subject matter already studied or internalized, ensuring that students not only memorize but also comprehend the principles and their practical applications.

### 3. *Tadvidh Sambhāṣā* (Scientific Discussion)<sup>[4]</sup>

The third dimension of *Trividha Jñānopāya* is *Sambhāṣā Vidhi*—dialogue or scientific discussion. Etymologically, the word *Sambhāṣā* is derived from *sam* (together) + *bhāṣa* (speech), meaning "speaking together" or "collective discourse." According to the Sanskrit-English Dictionary, it signifies conversation, deliberation, or discourse. *Acharya Charaka* emphasizes *sambhāṣā* as an essential means for refining knowledge through mutual interaction between two or more physicians. This

exchange helps in clarifying doubts and deepening understanding of specialized subjects of *Ayurveda*.

*Charaka* further classifies *Sambhāṣā Vidhi* into distinct forms:

*Jalpa*: A constructive dialogue where participants share and exchange knowledge for mutual enrichment.<sup>[5]</sup>

*Vitandā*: A critical discussion intended to highlight differences in opinion, enabling participants to defend their own viewpoints and engage in rigorous debate.<sup>[6]</sup>

Through these dialogical methods, knowledge is sharpened, ambiguities are resolved, and the capacity for analytical reasoning is enhanced.

### NEED AND SCOPE OF TRIVIDHA JÑĀNOPĀYA

1. To develop independent theories supported by evidence-based knowledge.
2. To enable critical evaluation and reinterpretation of earlier works.
3. To facilitate the generation of new perspectives and research innovations.

### DISCUSSION

*Acharya Charaka* has presented one of the most comprehensive and timeless frameworks for learning methodology, often considered an encyclopedic account of education in *Ayurveda*. A similar philosophy is echoed in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, which outlines four steps: *dr̥ṣṭavya* (to be observed), *śrotavya* (to be heard), *manthavya* (to be reflected upon), and *nidhidhyāsaniya* (to be meditated upon).

The concept of *Trividha Jñānopāya* can be correlated with progressive stages of education. *Adhyayana* may be viewed as the stage of primary educational skill development, focusing on the foundation of study and reading practices. *Adhyāpana* can be interpreted as secondary educational skill development, where methods of teaching, explanation, and the rules of instruction are emphasized. Finally, *Tadvidha Sambhāṣā* represents higher educational skill development, where learners move beyond reading and understanding to participate in intellectual exchanges such as debates, discussions, seminars, conferences, and academic deliberations.

Thus, the *Upaniṣadic* approach—*dr̥ṣṭavya* and *śrotavya* equated with *Adhyayana*, *manthavya* with *Adhyāpana*, and *nidhidhyāsana* with *Tadvidha Sambhāṣā*—parallels the methodology described by *Charaka*, underlining the holistic and multi-layered nature of knowledge acquisition and dissemination.

### CONCLUSION

The acquisition of knowledge can be compared to obtaining hidden treasures from the vast ocean of education, where the process of learning (*Trividha Jñānopāya*) resembles pearls enclosed within shells, accessible only through a systematic and appropriate approach.

A detailed study and critical evaluation of *Charaka's* concept of *Jñānopāya* reveals that *Adhyayana* represents the foundation of education, focusing on primary learning skills achieved through reading and listening during early academic training.

*Adhyāpana* corresponds to the systematic dissemination of acquired knowledge, wherein the learner transforms into a teacher by presenting, interpreting, and expressing the subject matter after thorough contemplation.

*Tadvidha Saṁbhāṣā* can be understood as an advanced stage of knowledge enrichment, where existing understanding is refined and expanded through participatory discussions, debates, and scholarly assemblies (Pariśads).

Hence, Charaka's Trividha Jñānopāyas may justifiably be regarded as a comprehensive and timeless framework, serving as both a guide and an encyclopedic manual for effective learning methodology across generations.

## REFERENCE

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