

# संस्कारो हि गुणान्तराधानमुच्यते – WSR To Shodasha Samskara.

Dr Bishnupriya Mohanty.

MD(Samhita), PhD(Basic Principle)

Professor & Head.

Department of Sanskrit Samhita and Siddhanta.

Mayekar Vedant.

IV B.A.M.S.

Chinmay Mhatre.

IV B.A.M.S

Dr Sangram Keshari Das.

Professor & Head; Dravyaguna Vijnana.

Gomantak Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya and Research Centre, Shiroda, Goa. 403103.

## Abstract:

Ancient Indian tradition describes various Sanskaras (Sacraments) outlined from birth to death of an individual. Out of the sixteen Sanskaras described eight are for children. In Ayurveda, the word Sanskaras is introduced as " Samskaraohi Gunaantradhyanam " which means qualitative enhancement carried out by incorporating the precise qualities (Transforming of the qualities). All these Samskaras are based on Dharma and yet they are completely scientific. Every Samskara and its observance are very useful in human life. Though principally considered as religious rites, they were significant in perspective of child health and provided chance for routine examination of growth and developmental milestones of child at regular intervals well as played pivotal role in adult life.

**Key Word:** Samskara, Sacraments, Tradition.

Date of Submission: 02-09-2023

Date of Acceptance: 12-09-2023

## I. Introduction:

Ayurveda defines Sanskara as process that imparts positive change in Dravya, Shareera, Mana and in the Aatma. Sanskara are specific conduct mainly practices for children to acquire skill, fitness and new qualities, etc. Children become full-fledged member of the specific religious community with the help of Sanskara.

The major sixteen types of Sanskara which practiced anciently are as follows:

- Garbhadhana Sanskara.
- Pumsavana Sanskara.
- Simantonayana Sanskara.
- Jaatkarma Sanskara
- Namkarana Sanskara
- Niskramana Sanskara
- Annaprashana Sanskara
- Chudakarana Sanskara
- Karnvedhana Sanskara
- Upanayana Sanskara
- Vedarambha Sanskara
- Samavartana Sanskara
- Vivaha Sanskara
- Vanprastha Sanskara
- Sanyasa Sanskara
- Antyesthi Sanskara

### **Garbhadhan Samskara :**

Garbhadhan Samskara is the first Samskara among Sixteen Samskaras approved in our scriptures. After entering into a social and worldly life, this Garbhadhana Samskara is performed. Main objective of the married life is to have the best children and to continue the succession of the family.

### **Punsavan Samskara:**

After Garbhadhana Samskara, when symptoms of a woman becoming pregnant are observed then for mental development and purification of the child in the womb of the mother, this Punsavan Samskara is performed. The time prescribed for performing this Samskara is 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> or 15 month after the symptoms of pregnancy are observed. In Paraskara Gruhya Sutra it is stated:

This Samskara is considered essential by our Acharyas for overall development of the child. This Samskara, which is related to a child, who is yet in the womb of the mother, is performed in Shubh Nakshatra. This Punsavana Samskara is performed with a view that a healthy and bright child may be born. In this Samskara, Poojana of Agni (God of Fire) should be performed, Mantra of one's own Ishtadev (One's own personal god in whom a person may have ardent faith) should be performed for 100 times and 16 Sixteen Samskaras; thereafter meals and Dakshina (Act of offering alms with reverence) should be offered to Brahmins and should obtain their blessings.

### **Simantonayan Samskara:**

Simantonayan Samskara is also known as Simantakarana or Simanta Samskara. The objective of this Samskara is to obtain Saubhagya (To obtain good luck and life of husband). The main objective of this Samskara is to prevent premature abortion and to protect simultaneously the pregnant mother and the growth of the child in the womb of the mother. This Samskara is performed in 4<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> month of pregnancy. In Ashwalayan Gruhya Sutra it is stated to perform this Samskara in the 4<sup>th</sup> month. During the performance of ritual of this Samskara, a prayer is performed to the deities.

### **Jaat Karma Samskara (Birth-rites per Vedic rituals):**

Thereafter, birth-rites of the child should be performed per Vedic rituals, which are as follows: first of all, honey and ghee duly "consecrated" with Vedic mantras (Chanted by Brahmanas or priests) should be anointed to the child. Breast milk should first be fed from the right breast, and should be done so after performing the rituals mentioned above. An earthen pot filled with water should be consecrated with mantras and kept near the head of the child. In the Scriptures, it is stated to perform this.

The Samskara is prior to cutting off the navel string of the newly born child from that of its mother. For intellectual development, strength and long life of the newly born child, who has experienced this divine world for the first time, a pious mixture of honey, Sugar and Ghee is placed on the tongue of the child with a golden stick and at that time special Vedic Mantra is chanted. This Samskara is performed with special Mantras and rituals. After sanctifying with Mantras the mixture of two drops of Ghee and six drops of Shahad, the mixture is placed on the tongue of the child and thereafter the father performs the ritual of Yagna. Thereafter the father whispers in the left ear of the child- " Your secret name is Veda" . Thereafter the father cuts the navel string of the child and blesses him:

### **Namkaran Samskara:**

On the tenth day of delivery, the woman, along with her child, should take bath in water treated with fragrant herbs, Shweta Sarshapa (White variety of mustard – Brassica nigra Koch.) and Lodhra (Symlocos recemosa Roxb.). They should be dressed in light, new and clean garments, while the woman should also be adorned in pure, light and variegated ornaments. The garments and ornaments should have been consecrated using Vedic rituals, and blessed by priests wearing white garments and without any physical deformities. Then the child, having been wrapped in a new garment, should be placed with his head facing the east or the north. The father of the child should pay obeisance to the Gods and Brahmins on behalf of the child and then give it two names: one denoting the Nakshatra under which it was born and the other intended for social interactions. The name for social purpose should have a Ghosha (Sonant) for its first letter and for its last a Antastha (Semi-vowel) or usman (Sibilants and Aspirate), should be free of Vriddhi (Diphthongs), indicative of one of the three ancestors (Father, grandfather and great grandfather) and not a new created. The constellar name should be identical to that of the deity of the Nakshatra and should be made up of two or four (Sanskrit) syllables. : After ten nights, on eleventh day, this Samskara is performed. In our Scriptures, ten days immediately after the birth of a child are considered as Asauch (Sutak). And therefore, it is stated in the scriptures to perform this Samskara on the 11<sup>th</sup> day. Even Rishi Yagnavalkya recommends it. But some other Karma Kanda learned persons believe that this Samskara can be performed not only on 11<sup>th</sup> day but also on any other pious day thereafter as per noble

position of the stars and planets. After performing Pooja of one's own personal god, this Samskara is performed either by the eldest male member of the family or the father himself.

**Niskraman Samskara:**

The main objective of this Samskara is that, a child may be introduced with this great and gigantic universe created by the Lore Brahma and the child may also gain maturity from this wonderful creation of the world and he may protect Dharma and Samskruti and enjoy this world for a longer period of time. The opinion of Niskraman is that: "To come out. This Samskara is performed in the fourth month immediately after the birth of a child. It is stated in the scripture to decorate the child with precious ornaments and clothes and to have him Darshana of Surya. Thereafter the child is placed lying on the floor in home in front of the idol image of the deity.

**Anna-Prashan Samskara:**

Purpose of this Samskara is to concentrate upon the physical and mental development of the child. Meaning of Anna-Prashan is that so far the child was nourished only upon the milk of his mother and now the child should be given some quantity of the food. When the child takes the first ever meals in his mouth, this Samskara is called Anna-Prashan Samskara. The scriptures have identified the meals as Life. By taking the meals, physical and mental development of the child is achieved expeditiously. To strengthen and develop the body and the mind, the meals have the maximum contribution. Pure and nutritious meals are the key to healthy body. If the meals are pure then only the inner self gets purified. Mind, intellect and soul are purified only through the meals and therefore, importance of this Samskara is much in human life. Our Dharmacharyas have considered the 6<sup>th</sup> month from the date of birth, as the proper time for this Samskara. Even Lord Manu has also asked to perform this Samskara in the sixth month or as per the taboos of the family because after six months, digestive power of the child develops. Observing the best position of the planets and ominous day, this Samskara should be performed. It is considered ominous to offer 'Kshira' and the sweet to the child in Anna Prashanna.

**Karna-Vidh Samskara:**

After achieving success in scientific experiments, our Rishis have started observing these Samskaras in practical human life. This Karna-Vedha Samskara has both religious as well as scientific importance as it helps in remaining healthy. As per Ayurveda, by making a hole at the bottom of the ear, a specific Nadi gets holed and one is prevented from the disease Hernia. Karnendriya has direct contact and effect with Virya Vahini of a child. By making a hole into it, one is prevented from all the aspects which destroy the Semen of man. Therefore, this Samskara is performed to protect the child from all these difficulties. This is an important organ of the body consisted of the five elements of nature. An ear is an important organ of the human body. One can listen through the ears. With Karna-vidh, the body is protected against many diseases and listening capacity increases. After Karnavedha, we wear the ornaments in it. We all know that ornaments are the symbol of beauty of our body.

**Vidyarambh Samskara:**

Acharyas have different opinions about the chronological place of this Samskara. Some of the Acharyas believe that, Vidyarambha Samskara should be performed after Annaprashanna Samskara. Whereas other Acharyas believe that, this Samskara should be performed after Chudakarana Samskara. But generally at the time of Anna Prashanna, a child cannot speak and therefore it is not possible to perform Vidyarambha Samskara. Moreover, by the time Chudakarana Samskara is performed, the child becomes curious to learn and therefore it is proper to perform Vidyarambha Samskara after Chudakarana Samskara.

**Chudakarana Samskara:**

Chudakarana Samskara is also known as Mundan Samskara. It is directed by Acharyas to perform this Samskara either in 1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> year. In Manu-Smriti it is stated to perform this Samskara in 1<sup>st</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> year.

As per this ritual, hairs of the child are divided into three parts, a Shikha is kept and the remaining hairs are removed from the head while chanting Mantras. The removed hair is kept on the seat of straws and then they are sanctified with Gau-Mutra and they are buried beneath the land either on the bank of the river Ganga or the land of Gau-Shala. Acharya Charaka considers it good to remove the nails, hair etc. as the same helps in increasing longevity, purity and beauty. As stated by our Manishi, the purpose of this Samskara is piety, intellectual level

**Yagnopavita Samskara:**

Yagnopavit or Upnayan Samskara is the most important Samskara for intellectual and mental development of a child. Through this Samskara, practical and spiritual progresses are established in the life of a child. After performing this Samskara, the mother of the Vedas- the goddess Gayatri is pleased.

**Vedarambha Samskara:**

This Samskara is relating to obtaining knowledge. After performing this Yagnopavit Samskara, the child stays in the Gurukul and studies the Vedas in the pious company of his Guru. Veda means ‘ Jnana. And therefore through the studies of the Vedas, a child obtains and acquires knowledge. It is stated in the scriptures that, nothing is better than knowledge in human life.

Therefore during the ancient times, this Samskara was very significant in obtaining knowledge. After Yagnopavita Samskara, the child was used to be handed over to an appropriate Acharya with a view to introduce him with the studies of the Vedas. Four types of Veda-Vratas are started. Mahanamni, Mahavrata, Upnishad and Go Dana. These four are called Vratas.

**Keshanta Samskara:**

On completion of the studies of a student in Gurukul, this Samskara is performed in the pious company of Acharya. This Samskara is also called Keshant or Godan Samskara and it is performed on attaining the age of 16 years. In fact it is stated to perform this Samskara, when the hair of the chin and moustache start growing. Now the child attains the youth. In fact this Samskara is a natural link between leaving Gurukul and entering Gruhasthashram. After obtaining expertise in Vedas-Puranans, various skills and branches of knowledge, the hair are purified through Kesh-Samavartan Samskara.

**Samavartan Samskara:**

Samavartan means to come back home. On completion of the studies of the Vedas and other scriptures in Gurukul when a student takes leave of his guru and Gurukul, this Samavartan Samskara is performed. Prior to this Samskara, Keshanta Samskara is performed and the student takes bath. This bath is like Samavartan Samskara. It is stated to take bath of eight different pots filled with water with various flavoured things and Aushadhis and Ayurvedic herbal items. This bath is taken with chanting of special Mantras. Thereafter Brahmchari forsakes Mekhla and Danda (While performing Yagnopavit Samskara, the child is offered Mekhla and Danda). After Samavartan Samskara both of them are forsaken. After performing this Samskara, Acharya bestows a degree upon the student and then only a student acquires the eligibility to enter Grihasthashrama. The student wears beautiful clothes and ornaments, obtains the blessings of Acharya and the elders and leaves Gurukul to go home.

**Vivah Samskara:**

Vivah is the most important Samskara of human life. During the ancient times, this Samskara is most important for both men and women. It is stated in our scriptures to observe Vrata of Brahmcharya from Yagnopavit Samskara to Samavartan Samskara. On completion of the study of the Vedas when a student becomes young he understands the social traditions and becomes mature. At that time he is made to enter Grihasthashram. During the ancient time, after 25 years, a student on completing his studies used to get married. This is such a Samskara wherein people of all the four Varnas perform the ritual in similar manner. Vivah grants social approval to the relationship of a man with a woman and simultaneously it also prepares background for companionship between the two in life.

**Agni Samskara:**

There are two extreme points of human life. One is birth and the other is death. The cycle of life exists between the two. Those who have abolished these two points, they have attained emancipation in their lives. But without emancipation, these two points are inevitable in human life. There is no family on this earth, wherein there has not been any death. Death is the last stage of life and everyone has to reach there. In the first stage of human life, there should be obtaining knowledge in Brahmcharyashram and after Grihasthashram he should become Vanprasthi. By awakening Vairagya (Renunciation), Viveka (Humility) and through Swadhyay (Satsang), Tapa, Dhyana (Meditation) and Sadhana, a person should make his death noble. It is stated in the scriptures that on attaining the age of fifty (50) years, one should forsake all affection of this worldly life and he should enter Vanprasthashram and should perform Bhagwat Bhakti.

## II. Discussion & Conclusion:

Human life is a gift to expand our consciousness. Education is for humility and more we become recipient of higher degree our humbleness increases. Mind is universal canvas; where thoughts are projected. Instead of predicting unpredictable future; we all are need to do good practices(Samskara)by knowing who am I or how be kind full to our self . How we think today ; tomorrow we become so. As energy has a blue print of mater, similarly our thoughts are the blue print of our physical body. Every second matter energy conversion is going on in human body. Our thought changes; we also changes. Samskaras are to bring and establish new possibilities in human life. Except 5%(Diseases population) the rest 95% population are healthy. In different stage of their life teaching & training about Shodasha Samskara could be a right investment to preserve the health of healthy person.

## References:

- [1]. Williams Monier. Sanskrit-English Dictionary. Edition 2002. New Delhi.Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers. P-417.3.
- [2]. Sharma R.K. & Dash Bhagwan. Caraka Samhita. Vol ii. Edition 2012. Varanasi.Chowkhambha Krishnadas Academy.Ch.Sh.8/46. P-500.
- [3]. Tewari P.V. Kasyapa Samhita. Edition1996.Varanasi. Chaukhambha Bharati Academy.K.Khil.12/4-5. P-594
- [4]. Sharma P.V. Susruta Samhita. Vol. ii. Edition2010. Varanasi. Chaukhambha Bharati Academy. Su.Sh.10/13. P-227.
- [5]. Murthy Srikantha K.R. Astanga Hridayam.Vol. iii. Edition 1995. Varanasi. Krishnadas Academy. A.H.Utt.1/11. P-5.
- [6]. Ghai O.P. Essential Pediatrics. Seventhedition 2010. New Delhi. Cbs Publishers &Distributers. P-124.
- [7]. Murthy Srikantha K.R. Astanga Hridayam.Vol. iii. Edition 1995. Varanasi. Krishnadas Academy. A.H.Utt.1/22-23. P-7.
- [8]. Chunekar. K.C. Bhav Prakash Nighantu. 10thedition. Varanasi. Chaukhambha Vishwabharati. P-128.
- [9]. Sharma P.V. Dravya Guna Vigyana. Iind Vol. Edition 2003. Varanasi. Chaukhambhavishwabharti Prakashana. P-616.