



ANATOMICAL VIEW OF KARNAVEDHANA SANSKARA

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ABSTRACT

The term *Sanskara*, also known as "*Sanskaro Hi Gunantaradhynum Ucchate*," refers to qualitative improvement carried out by adding certain attributes. *Sanskaras* are sometimes referred to as cultural ceremonies. *Sanskaras* are significant events in an individual's life, from conception to death. These cultural events not only have socio-cultural significance, but they also have considerable medical significance in Ayurveda. The number of *Sanskaras* vary according to community. The traditional *Sanskaras* are 16 in number and were proposed by *Maharshi Dayananda*. *Karnavedhana* is an important *Sansakara* of medical and sociocultural significance. Aside from the cosmetic value (*Karnaabhushana*). *Karnavedhana* was thought to protect the body from harmful health conditions such as *Grhas*. Piercing the ear may aid in activating the immune system, resulting in secondary immunity against a variety of infections. The ear lobule is made up of robust areolar and adipose tissues that are generally smooth but display creases. It has a substantial blood supply and may aid in keeping the ears warm and in maintaining balance. The ear lobule has a variety of nerve terminals. *Karnavehana* is an acupuncture technique. Acupuncture is a comprehensive medical treatment that focuses on healing energy imbalances in the body. Acupuncture has traditionally been used to prevent, diagnose, and treat disease, as well as to promote overall health. Different body piercing styles, each type of body piercing was done with a unique goal and to reap certain health benefits. These cultural events also help children grow and develop. These occurrences are also scientifically valid and have medicinal significance. This article examines the *Sanskara* in depth and assesses its significance in light of modern scientific understanding.

Keywords: Anatomy of ear, Acupuncture, *Karnavedhana Sanskara*.

INTRODUCTION

Ayurveda is a science of life. It is an *Upveda* of *Atharvaveda*. From the *Vedic* period onwards, Indian literature explains *Sanskaras*. Various *Sanskaras* have been detailed in *Ayurvedic Samhitas*, along with their time period and method. All of the *Sanskaras* mentioned in Indian literature are not medically significant, and only a few are socio - culturally significant. Children are wealth of nation. The physical and psychological health of a country's youth is determined by the care provided during his childhood. Cultural events are essential for a child's

growth and development. These occurrences are also critical in detecting any abnormalities in a child's growth and development.

The word *Sanskara* is introduced in *Ayurveda* as "*Sanskaro hi Gunantaradhynum Ucchate*," which implies that qualitative development is achieved by adding certain attributes (transporting of the qualities)¹. During the *Sanskaras*, the physician can examine the child's proper growth and development. *Sanskaras* are mentioned in the *Upanishads* as a means of growing and becoming proper in all four areas of human pursuit: *Dharma* (righteousness), *Artha* (wealth), *Karma* and *Kama* (labour and pleasure), and *Moksha* (liberation) (salvation). *Sanskaras* are life's turning points and should be cherished. The main purpose of *Sanskaras* is to achieve spirituality and aid in the realisation of *Moksha*, or ultimate union with the divine². It is very evident that simply doing these rites will not result in *Moksha*. However, if these *Sanskara* are not performed, *Moksha* may be impossible to achieve. The amount of *Sanskara* varies according to *Hindu Dharma*. It ranges between 16 to 40³. The *Gruhya Sutra* mentions 18-21 *Sanskara*, while *Manusmriti* explains 13 of them and *Gautam GruhyaSutra* explains 40 of them. While *Maharshi Dayanand's* 16 *Sanskara* are extensively acknowledged and taken into account by *Ayurveda Acharyas*⁴. These 16 *Sanskaras* are known as the *Shodasa Sanskaras*. *Karnavehana Sanskara* (ear lobe piercing) is an important *Sanskara* with medical and socio-cultural significance⁵.

Acupuncture is used in *Karnavedhana*. Acupuncture involves inserting a very thin needle into a person's skin at certain places on the body to varied depths. According to research, it can assist to reduce pain and restore the energy flow to its appropriate balance. Acupuncture points are thought to be locations where nerves, muscles, and connective tissue can be stimulated⁶. The stimulation improves blood flow while also causing the body's natural painkillers to activate. Acupuncture has been shown in modern research to have impacts on the neurological system, endocrine and immunological systems, cardiovascular system, and digestive system. By stimulating the many systems of the body. Acupuncture can assist to relieve pain while also improving sleep, digestion, and overall well-being. Body piercing is a type of body alteration that involves puncturing or cutting a section of the human body to create a hole through which jewellery can be inserted. Various cultures have also practiced ear, nose, lip, tongue, nipple, and genital piercing. A person may choose to have a piercing for a variety of cultural, religious, or personal reasons. Most body piercings are done for cosmetic reasons, but what we don't realise is that this act can potentially be damaging to us if done in the wrong area. We can feel favourable spiritual advantages if we pierce the suitable acupuncture spots⁷.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Material

- Ayurvedic literature related to *Sanskara* and *Karnavedhana Sanskara* collected from classical Ayurvedic literature.
- Modern literature related to acupuncture and body piercing collected from research articles and journals.

Methodology: Literary study.

DISCUSSION

Every aspect of life is sacred in *Hindu* tradition, thus each significant moment, from conception to *Anteyeshthi* (death cremation), is marked by special rites. The *Sanskaras* are conducted for the individual's physical, social, and religious development. *Sanskaras* are cultural activities

held at the secondary level that provide an opportunity for family and friends to get together and bond. And it is this relationship that provides the foundation for a happy existence.

Anatomy of External ear

The external, middle, and internal ear are the three parts of the ear. The fusion of the six auricular hillocks is a complex process that occurs during the formation of the external ear. Development begins in the third week of pregnancy with the creation of an otic disc from ectoderm thickening. It is formed from single piece of yellow elastic cartilage covered with perichondrium and skin⁸. The human ear lobe is made up of tough areolar and adipose connective tissue that lacks the hardness and elasticity of the rest of the auricle. Since ear lobe does not contain cartilage. It has a substantial blood supply and may aid to warm the ear and maintain balance. The ear lobe is made up of epithelium and connective tissue and is derived from dermatomes. The dermis is made up of mesenchymal cells, whereas the sclerotome is made up of mesenchymal cells.

The posterior auricular artery, the anterior auricular branch of the superficial temporal artery, and the occipital artery all supply the auricle. Sensory innervations are⁹.

- 1) Great auricular nerve – it is a branch of cervical plexus, it supplies auricle, helix, antihelix and lobule.
- 2) Lesser occipital nerve- supplies small portion of helix.
- 3) Auriculotemporal nerve-Mandibular branch of trigeminal nerve, supplies auricle.
- 4) Auricular branch of vagus nerve- supplies concha and auditory meatus¹⁰.

Karnavedhana Sanskara (Piercing the earlobes)

This *Sanskara* is performed at a young age. The term "infant" refers to a small child who is between the ages of one month and one year. In Ayurvedic texts, there are various perspectives on how to do this ceremony.

- a) According to *Sushruta* in 6th or 7th month.
- b) According to *Vagbhatta* in 6th, 7th, 8th month.
- c) There is chapter named “*Chudakarmiye*” in *Kashyapa Samhita*.

PROCEDURE

According to *Sushruta*, in the sixth or seventh month, on fortnight and auspicious *Tithi* (date), *Karana*, *Muhurta*, and *Nakshatra*, the child should be placed in the lap of a wet-nurse or male attendant engaging and consoling him with toys; then the physician, pulling the ear with his left hand, should pierce the ear lobe at the naturally designed hole enlightened with the sun's (*Devkrit Chhidra*) where there is maximum translucency from the light source with his right hand slowly and evenly by needle or awl in case of thin and thick lobes respectively; in male children, first pierce the right ear lobe, but in female children, first pierce the left ear lobe, and then insert the *PichhuVarti*. *Vagbhatta* mentioned a similar procedure. *Ajirna* (indigestion), the urge to defecate, and an extremely hot climate are all contraindications to *Karnavedhana Sanskara*¹¹.

Importanace of Karnavedhana Sanskara

1. *Sushruta* pierces a child's ear for the purpose of *Raksha-nimit* (disease protection) and *Abhushanartha* (ornamentation). According to *Kashyapa*, the ear of a kid should be pierced by an experienced and qualified physician in order to obtain religion (*Dharma*), desire (*Karma*), and prosperity (*Artha*). This method appears to promote the immune system's strengthening in response to injury to the ear lobules, which trigger antigen-antibody reactions in the early life period, resulting in secondary immunization against a variety of infections.

2. According to *Sushruta* and *Kashyapa*, this treatment should be conducted by an expert surgeon rather than an inexperienced *Vaidya*, as this can result in complications such as fever, *Manyastambha*, *Hanustambha*, *Karnashoola* etc.
3. This rite is designed to prepare the child's inner ears for receiving sacred sound. This has great spiritual and symbolic meaning as well.
4. Modes to increase the pierced hole provide lubrication and wound infection prevention. The surgery is also performed in the winter, which reduces the risk of infection.
5. Holding the earlobe against the light visualizes the path of fine vessels to avoid bleeding and allows for early wound healing.
6. Wearing ear ornaments denotes a person's status and wealth. The women also ensured that they were in a constant state of physical and emotional well-being.
7. According to acupuncture therapy, the earlier a child's ear is pierced, the better for the brain's development because the meridians connecting the brain flow via this area. They also believe that the middle of the lobe is where the point of vision is located.
8. There are numerous more advantages to piercing a girl's ears, including maintaining regularity in the menstrual cycle and assisting in the prevention of hysteria and other serious disorders.
9. The earrings are said to aid in the maintenance of electric current in the human body. Ear piercing aids in mental enhancement and the elimination of negative emotions.
10. Ear piercing, according to *Sushruta*, the great Indian surgeon, avoids ailments like hydrocele and hernia.
11. The ear lobes include meridian points that connect to the human brain's right and left hemispheres. When this site is penetrated, it aids in the activation of various brain areas.
12. Acupuncture therapy, according to its principles, aids in the rapid and healthy growth of the brain as well as memory enhancement.

CONCLUSION

Sanskaras are important life events or rituals. We might conclude that cultural ceremonies are important not only for social reasons, but also for medical reasons. According to the chronological age of the child, correct *Sanskara* should be followed. It may also aid a child's growth and development. Auricular acupuncture tends to modulate autonomic dysfunction by boosting parasympathetic activity, which is very important in *Karnavedhana Sanskara*. Because *karnavedhana* stimulates the vagus nerve, which also supplies the stomach, appetite should be enhanced, which is essential for a child's growth. Auricular electropuncture was found to lower seizure frequency and severity in clinical trials. Epileptic discharges were reduced by electroacupuncture. By stimulating certain anatomical areas, acupuncture improves the body's functions and aids the natural self-healing process.

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