

Psychotropic Medicinal Plants in Ayurveda with Special Reference to Medhya Dravya

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Abstract: Mental and behavioural disorders represent a major global health burden affecting cognition, emotions, and quality of life. Ayurveda, the ancient Indian system of medicine, presents a holistic view of mental health through the integrated functioning of *Śarīra* (body), *Manas* (mind), and *Ātmā* (consciousness). Ayurvedic classics describe numerous medicinal plants exhibiting psychotropic actions by influencing memory, intellect, emotional balance, sleep, and higher mental functions. Among them, *Medhya Dravya* constitute a unique group known for enhancing *Dhi* (intellect), *Dhṛti* (retention), and *Smṛti* (memory). The present article critically reviews psychotropic medicinal plants described in Ayurveda with special emphasis on *Medhya Dravya*, their classical references, Ayurvedic mode of action, and contemporary relevance. The concept of *Medhya Rasāyana* offers a rational, preventive, and sustainable approach to modern mental healthcare.

Keywords: Psychotropic medicinal plants; *Medhya Dravya*; *Manas Roga*; *Rasāyana*; Cognitive enhancement; Ayurveda