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Validation of questionnaire on *Meda Sara Pareeksha* - A Multicentric Study

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ABSTRACT

Ayurveda is one of the most renowned traditional systems of medicine that has survived and flourished from ages till date. There are many avenues still to be explored by the researchers, practitioners and experts in the field who carry the responsibility of keeping the traditional systems of medicine alive and contributing to their growth in the future. It follows an individual focused treatment strategy. *Sara* is described as 'Vishudhataro Dhatu'^[1] meaning best quality of the *Dhatu* and is one among *Dashavidha Pareeksha*.^[2] This work is intended for revalidating of concept of *Sara Pareeksha* to the contemporary era aimed at its reachable equality in perception without losing its meaning. Very few works are done on *Sara Pareeksha* and no known works consummate on the questionnaire designing, detailed assessment of *Meda Sara*. Need of standardization of basic principles like *Sara* concept should be supported with solid evidence using contemporary parameters. Scientific and statistical validation of questionnaire on assessment of *Sara Pareeksha*, showed relevance in effective and efficient examination of *Sara Pareeksha*.

Key words: Questionnaire, Validation, *Meda Sara Pareeksha*, *Dhatu*, *Ayurveda*.

INTRODUCTION

Scientific value of diagnostic approach according to *Ayurveda* centered on two-fold method - *Roga Pareeksha* and *Rogi Pareeksha*. *Rogi Pareeksha* pertained with health status both physical and psychosomatic state of the patient. In-depth examination of the patient is inevitable as medicines selection done by prior assessment of *Roga* and *Rogi Bala* ten-fold examination of *Rogi* comprises of *Prakriti*,

Vikriti, *Sara*, *Samhanana*, *Pramana*, *Satmya*, *Satva*, *Ahara Shakti*, *Vyayama Shakti* and *Vaya*.^[3] The term *Sara* signifies the purest form of *Dhatu*. *Ashta Saras* are explained that comprises of seven *Dhatu Sara* and *Satwa Sara*. It is one among the important techniques of clinical examination employed to assess the status of different *Dhatu*. *Sara* ascribed as essence of *Dhatu* that provides stability to the body. Derangement of *Dhatu Sarata* leads to *Dhatuvaishamyam*, fallouts in disease manifestation.^[4] *Sara Pareeksha* is done to ascertain the *Bala Mana Visheshajnana* and *Ayu Pramana*.^[5] The relevance in assessing the *Bala* of a person has been cited in *Kalpasthanam* in the context of *Samshodhana Chikitsa*.^[6] *Samshamana Chikitsa* also hinged upon the *Rogi Bala*^[7] as well as *Aushadha Sevanakala*.^[8]

Rasa the foremost formed *Dhatu* among *Sapta-Dhatu*, *Acharya Dalhana* clarifies that in terms of *Twaksara*.^[9] The word *Twak* corresponds to *Rasa* residing in the *Twak*.^[10] Hence *Twaksara* person possess a good quality of *Rasa Dhatu* in predominance. *Twak Sara*

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Purushas can be defined as “individuals having predominance of essence of a good quality and quantity of *Rasa Dhatu*, characterized with a healthy and good-looking skin”. *Rakta Sara* person is known to possess unctuous (*Snigdha*) and coppery nails (*Tamra Nakha*), eyes (*Nayana*), palate (*Talu*), tongue (*Jivha*), lips (*Oshtha*), palms and soles (*Pani padatala*).^[11] *Mamsa Dhatu* is the third structural element in the sequence of *Saptadhatu* formation, considered as one of the important criteria for defining compactness of body and immunity of an individual.^[12]

Meda Dhatu is the fourth structural element in the order of *Sapta Dhatu*. *Meda Sara* is characterized by the abundance of unctuousness in complexion, voice, eyes, hair of the head and other parts of the body, nail, teeth, lips, urine and faeces. Such Individual are endowed with wealth, power, happiness, enjoyment, charity, simplicity and delicate habits. *Medasara* person is known to pass unctuous urine and sweat, has a mellow voice, a bulky body and are incapable of doing physical labour.

Innate strength of the individual cannot be assessed by the bulk of the body, can only be judged by the *Sara Pareeksha*. Physician should not be misjudged to decide a person is strong or weak from his bulky or small body structure or appearance. Lean and slender may seem to be strong enough, just comparable to “*Pipeelika Bharaharanavath Siddhi*”^[13] implies that small ants capable of carrying much more weight than its own. *Vikriti* (pathological changes) in *Sara* to be assessed as it varies according to the stages of *Samprapti* of *Vyadhi*, food and lifestyle the individual. *Ayurveda* requires evidence-based research in the area especially in diagnostic principles so that Ayurvedic diagnosis can be made more pinpointed leading to more effective treatment strategies as it is a science based on logical explanation on *Pareeksha* aspects.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

To frame, assess and validate questionnaire on *Meda Sara Pareeksha*.

METHODOLOGY

Two Steps in Questionnaire Study

1. Method of Designing Questionnaire
2. Method of Validation of Questionnaire

Steps of Designing Questionnaire

- Write a study protocol
- Draw a plan of analysis
- Draw a list of the information needed
- Design different part of questionnaire
- Order of questions
- Rating scale
- Complete the questionnaire

Questionnaires are the most commonly used tool in survey research. However, the results of a particular survey are worthless if the questionnaire is written inadequately. Questionnaires should produce valid and reliable demographic variable measures and yield valid and reliable individual disparities that self-report scales generate. Questionnaire developing based on the classical reference of assessment of *Charaka Sushrutoktha Meda Sara Purusha Lakshanas*, followed by validation through research methods. Basically, validation of Questionnaire involves two steps: 1. Preparation of Questionnaire 2. Expert Validity - obtaining suggestions and recommendations of subject experts for Content validity, to check the content of Questionnaire, this is done by experts or authority persons.

1. Preparation of Questionnaire

Considering the lack of tools for the assessment of *Sara* that to in *Meda Sara* and its importance in diagnosis and treatment, this questionnaire framed following *Charaka, Sushrutoktha Meda Sara Lakshana*

Table 1: The qualities of *Meda Sara* in Ayurvedic classical literature^[14,15]

<i>Sara</i>	<i>Charaka</i>		<i>Sushruta</i>
<i>Meda Sara</i>	Complexion, voice, eyes, hairs, nails, teeth, lips, urine and feces	Unctuous	Unctuous urine, sweat, voice, mighty

Psychological features	Wealth, prosperity, happiness, enjoyment, charity, simplicity and delicacy in dealing	body and lack of exercise tolerance
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Charakoktha Meda Sara Lakshans are *Snigdha* of *Varna, Svava, Netra, Kesha, Loma, Nakha, Danta, Oushta, Mutra, Pureesha, Vitta, Aishwarya, Sukha, Upabhoga, Pradhanani, Arjava, Sukumara Upacarata*. Other than *Charakoktha Meda Sara Lakshana, Sushruta Acharya* has mentioned *Snigdha Sweda, Bruhat Shareera, Ayaasa Asashinu*. Total 9 domains - *Varna Snigdha, Svava Snigdha, Netra Snigdha, Kesha Loma Snigdha, Nakha Danta Oushta Snigdha, Mutra Pureesha Sveda Snigdha, Brihat Shareera, Ayaasa Asahishnu*, Psychological characteristics of *Meda Sara* of 33 questions were framed & scores are attributed. Here the term *Snigdha* is understood with *Paryaya* and its *Guna Karma*.

- *Paryaya - Cikkanam, Masrinam* according to *Amarakosha*^[16]
- *Snigdha Guna Karma - Kledana* according to *Ashtanga Hrudiya*,^[17] *Maardava* according to *Acharya Sushruta*^[18]

Hence term *Snigdha* is apprehended as *Cikana, Masruna, Mardava, Kledana* and these meanings of *Snigdha* are applied according to the context in framing the questionnaire for *Snigdha* of *Varna, Svava, Netra, Kesha, Loma, Nakha, Danta, Aushta Mutra, Pureesha & Sveda*. Assessment of these *Sara Purusha Lakshanas* including both objective and subjective parameters and scores were attributed accordingly. Respective methodology followed are enlisted in the questionnaire attached.

Method of Validation of Questionnaire

2. Expert Validation

Expert validation for construct and content validity that includes:

- Focus Group Discussion / In-Depth Interviews with subject experts.

- Giving questionnaire with options-panel of experts are identified, a content validation form created that defines the construction of questionnaire.
- To examine and explore opinions regarding the items about both the positive and negative aspects of Questionnaire intended to measure and give expert opinions.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The questionnaire was designed based on *Charaka Sushrutoktha Meda Sara Purusha Lakshanas*. All the assessment parameters were segregated individually, translated into English in form of subjective and objective analysis. Total 12 experts were identified two from Alva's Ayurveda Medical College Moodbidri; two from JSS Ayurveda Medical College, Mysuru; two from SDMCA, Udupi; SDMCA, Bangalore; Kahaer's Sri BM Kankanawadi Ayurveda College, Shahapur, Belgavi; Guru Gorakshnath Institute of Medical Sciences (Ayurveda College), Arogya Dham, Balapar Road, Sonbarsa, Gorakhpur, Uttar Pradesh; SGE'S Dr. N.A. Magadum Ayurvedic Medical College, Hospital and PG Research Centre, Ankali. Tq. Chikodi. Dist. Belgaum; two from Parul University, Vadodara, Gujarat; They were sent the questionnaire for informed opinion from experts with a track opinion provided with judgement and information regarding assessment. Among the total majority suggestion were on *Snigdha* evaluation including the necessity adding of more grading system and Quantifying mild, moderate, severe unctousness. Also, suggestion for assessment of parameter like *Snigdha* of *Swava* and *Varna, Bruhat Shareera* were accepted and changes done in accordance with the requirement and available standard scales. All the 12 experts acclaimed that all questions incorporated were needed. Initially comprised of 27 questions, after incorporating the expert opinions 6 questions were added.

CONCLUSION

The actual strength of an individual can only be ascertained with *Sara Pareeksha*. The inherent power of an individual cannot be assessed by mere muscle bulk, fat distribution and BMI. Assessment of *Sara* is

very crucial in the practice of *Ayurveda* as it act as a window to understand the status of *Dhatu* in an individual. Also, for assessing the *Bala* of individual and paramount importance in selection of *Chikitsa*. Thus, Evaluation of *Dhatu Sarata* can be beneficial in *Samprapthi Vighattana*. Scientific and statistical validation of questionnaire on assessment of *Sara Pareeksha* showed relevance in effective and efficient examination of *Sara Pareeksha*.

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