



ISSN 2456-3110

Vol 9 · Issue 11

November 2024

Journal of
**Ayurveda and Integrated
Medical Sciences**

www.jaims.in

JAIMS

An International Journal for Researches in Ayurveda and Allied Sciences



Maharshi Charaka
Ayurveda

Indexed

A critical analysis of *Vishad Guna*; Exploring its properties and uses in Ayurveda

Mukesh Jangir¹, Chandan Singh², Rajendra Prasad Purvia³, Manoj Adlakha⁴

¹Post Graduate Scholar, Dept. of Dravyaguna, Post Graduate Institute of Ayurved, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Rajasthan Ayurved University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India.

²Professor & HOD, Dept. of Dravyaguna, Post Graduate Institute of Ayurved, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Rajasthan Ayurved University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India.

^{3,4}Associate Professor, Dept. of Dravyaguna, Post Graduate Institute of Ayurved, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Rajasthan Ayurved University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India.

ABSTRACT

All substances in the universe originate and develop with the inherent qualities of *Satva*, *Raja*, and *Tama*. This creation holds a significant position for its qualities. In material science, the characteristics of matter are influenced by its properties. These attributes differ from those of *Sattvaadi*. Understanding properties is crucial alongside understanding substances because all the qualities (*Gurvadi Guna*) attributed to substances are present in our bodies. When the body experiences decay for any reason, it can be restored to a balanced state by utilizing substances that possess similar properties. Conversely, when there is an excess of a certain property, substances with opposite properties are employed. Hence, qualities are also referred to as physical or medical qualities. Without an understanding of these properties, it is impossible to restore the body's metals to a state of equilibrium. Thus, understanding the properties existing in matter becomes imperative after exploring the matter. When a substance is combined or altered, it carries out diverse functions. Matter serves as a medium (*Kaaran Dravya*) for carrying out various actions.

Key words: *Gurvadi Guna*, *Vishad Guna*, *Cleanness property*, *Guna*, *Kshalana Karma*

INTRODUCTION

It can be said that "those who are dependent on matter due to *Samvaya* relation, who are free from efforts or actions, who are free from the properties of conjunction etc., who have non-independent causes for action, who are the causes in their quality, are called *Gunas*." [1]

Address for correspondence:

Dr. Mukesh Jangir

Post Graduate Scholar, Dept. of Dravyaguna, Post Graduate Institute of Ayurved, Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Rajasthan Ayurved University, Jodhpur, Rajasthan, India.

E-mail: dr.mukesh.jangir@gmail.com

Submission Date: 07/10/2024 Accepted Date: 19/11/2024

Access this article online

Quick Response Code



Website: www.jaims.in

DOI: 10.21760/jaims.9.11.19

The characteristics or definition of quality (*Guna*) can be defined in the following ways

- According to Philosophy and
- According to Ayurveda.

1. According to Philosophy^[2]

Acharyas of different philosophies have described the characteristics of virtues. The symptoms mentioned by *Acharyas* are as follows:

(a) According to *Vaisheshika Darshan*

द्रव्याश्रव्यगुणवान् संयोगविभागेष्वकारणमनपेक्ष इति गुण लक्षणम्। (वै.द.1/168)

The *Guna* characteristic is that it is matter-dependent and which is causeless and unexpected in combination and division.

(b) According to *Saamkhya philosophy*^[3]

अथ द्रव्याश्रिता ज्ञेया निर्गुणा निष्क्रिया गुणाः। (कारिकावली)

Those which are dependent on matter, have no qualities (*nirguna*) and are free from action (*nishkriya*), are called *Guna*.

2. According to *Ayurveda*, various *Acharyas* of *Ayurveda* have defined the characteristics of *Guna* as follows-

(a) According to *Acharya Charaka*^[4]

समवायी तु निश्चेष्टः कारणं गुणः। (च.सू. 1/51)

One who is dependent on the matter due to *Samvaya* relation (*Samvaya* is a Sanskrit word that means "to come together tightly", and it's used to describe an intimate relationship between two things that makes them inseparable. It means they can't be separated without destroying themselves).

(b) According to *Acharya Sushruta*^[5]

कर्मभिस्त्वनुमीयन्ते नानाद्रव्याश्रयाः गुणाः। (सू.सु. 46/521)

The various qualities (*Guna*) dependent on various substances are inferred by their actions.

Acharya Charaka has mentioned 41 types of *Guna*. In which he divided these into 4 types of groups.

1. *Gurvadi Guna*^[6,7] - mentioned 20 types.

गुर्वादयः तु गुरु लघु शीत उष्ण स्निग्ध रुक्ष मन्द तीक्ष्ण स्थिर सर मृदु कठिण विशद पिच्छिल क्षक्ष्ण खर स्थूल सूक्ष्म सान्द्र द्रवाः विंशतिः। (च.सू. 25/36, (च.शा.6/10)

2. *Paradi Guna* - he mentioned 10 types of *Guna* in this category. *Paratva*, *Apratva*, *Yukti*, *Sankhya*, *Sanyoga*, *Vibhaga*, *Prathaktwa*, *Parimaan*, *Sanskar*, and *Abhyash*.

3. *Aatma Guna* - in this category 6 types of *Guna* *Buddhi*, *Sukha*, *Dukha*, *Ichha*, *Dwesh*, and *Prayatna*.

4. *Vaisheshika Guna* - in this category 5 types of *Guna* according to *Panchmahabhoota's* property. Like- *Shabda*, *Sparsha*, *Roopa*, *Rasa* and *Gandha*.

Here we describe one of the main qualities (*Guna*) *Vishad Guna* and its properties for this research article.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the characteristics of *Vishad Guna*.

2. Effect of *Dravyas* having *Vishad Guna*, and their *Karma* in different systems of the body.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Charaka Samhita, *Sushruta Samhita*, *Bhavprakash Nighantu*, and other traditional *Ayurveda* Compendia, Modern textbooks using digital media, Ayush research portal, PubMed, Google Scholar, articles and research papers related to this topic on the internet were extensively studied.

LITERARY REVIEW

Vishad (Clarity) is one of the *Gurvadi* attributes. It is the opposite of un-cleanliness (*Pichhila*) quality. Clarity and stickiness are contrasting characteristics. They also complement each other. Clarity aids in clearing obstructions in the body's openings and pathways caused by an excess of mucus. Clearing away sliminess is aided by clarity, which opposes sliminess and helps remove stickiness from the body.

The properties of *Vishad* are evaluated by the functions of *Kleda-Achusan* and *Ropana-Karma*. *Vishad Guna* falls within the category of *Vata Guna* and can be explained by its action of *Kshalana Karma*. The concept of *Kshalana* could be understood as the cellular process of removing waste from the cell environment. *Vishad Guna* shows the ability to clean up and eliminate dead tissue, and pus, and expose the wound for healing.^[8]

Definition

यस्य क्षालने शक्तिः स विशदः। (हेमाद्रि)^[9]

That which has the power to destroy laxity (*Picchilata*) is called *Vishad Guna*.

In other words

The *Guna* through which *Dravya* can perform functions like *Shoshana* of *Cleda*, *Vranropana*, *Lekhana* of *Dhatu*, *Shoshana* of *Mala* & *Vata Vriddhi* is called *Vishad*.^[10]

Physical Appearance - क्लेदनाशकत्वं विशदत्वम् । (आतंक दर्पण)

Vishad Guna destroys the *Cleda*.

Physical Organization

धरानिलानलवृत्तिः । (आतंक दर्पण)

It contains an abundance of earth, air, and fire elements, but *Acharya Sushruta* has mentioned *Vayu*, *Agni*, and *Akasha* elements.^[11]

Sensuality:^[12] विशदो विपरीतोऽस्मात् क्लेदाचूषणरोपणः।
(सु.सू. 46/524)

Unlike *Pichhila Guna*, *Vishad* is one who exploits the *Cleda* and plants the wounds.

क्लेदच्छेदकरः ख्यातो विशदो व्रणरोपणः। (भा.प्र.)

According to *Bhavprakash*, *Vishad* is the destroyer of *Cleda* and the planter of wounds.

Functions^[13]

Dosha - *Vata* enhancer, *Kapha* destroyer.

Dhatu - Lowering the *Dhatu*s.

Mala - *Mala* exploitation.

Agni (Fire) - Fire enhancer

Others - Wound planter, Power lowering, *Cleda* exploitation |

The clarity of a substance is determined by its ability to eliminate stickiness from the body and facilitate the separation and delineation of cells and body parts. Thus, foods and medications that promote clarity in bodily components and eliminate stickiness are classified as possessing *Vishad Guna*. Sometimes, there can be obstructions in tissues and transportation pathways as a result of an abnormal rise in sliminess quality brought about by an excessive increase in *Kapha*, *Ama*, or fatty tissues. When this occurs, important nutrients and substances required to construct and maintain tissues will not flow easily. Tissues are damaged as a result of a lack of nourishment and assistance. Meanwhile, metabolic waste products, such as tissue toxins generated in cellular metabolism, are not removed from the body. The buildup of toxins and wastes can harm tissues and disrupt various functions.

To address this abnormal condition triggered by excessive stickiness, an opposing characteristic with the ability to eliminate the stickiness will be necessary. To accomplish this, it is necessary to provide intervention through medicines, foods, and treatments that possess the quality of clarity, known as *Vishad Guna*.

The clarity of a product would eliminate too much slipperiness, thus getting rid of obstructions and healing ailments stemming from an excess of slipperiness. The presence of excess *Kapha* in the body is responsible for sliminess. Clearness, brought about by *Vata*, counteracts and harmonizes sliminess caused by *Kapha*, *Ama*, or fat. When *Kapha* and other disease-causing factors that have led to sliminess are managed by the quality of clarity, the sliminess also reduces. Therefore, clarity quality combats the effectiveness of slickness quality and removes obstacles. This will aid in restoring usual bodily functions.

Salient features of clearness quality

- Clarity within the body is evident through its function of clearing sliminess and blockages caused by excess *Kapha*: The absence of sliminess or decrease in *Kapha* symptoms indicates the presence and effectiveness of clarity. A decrease in sliminess occurs by consuming items with *Vishad Guna*, which is the quality of clearness.
- This attribute also plays a role in the division and distinction of various body parts, resulting in a decrease in stickiness between components and the preservation of the body's structure. It prevents components from being close to each other."

Elemental relationship^[14]

The level of clarity in a substance is linked to three fundamental components: *Vayu*, *Agni*, and *Akasha*. Hence, the clarity level of a substance is determined by the abundance and dominance of these elements within it.

Effect on *Dosha* and *Dhatu*^[15]

The elimination of moisture (*Cleda*) from the body leads to a degradation of body tissues (*Dhatu Kshaya*), which in turn causes an increase in the *Vata dosha* and a decrease in *Kapha Dosha*. Clearness is one of *Vata*'s characteristics. Clearness quality enhances *Vata* and hence reduces *Kapha*. *Vata* promotes clarity in the body due to its clarity attribute. Similarly, everything that raises *Vata* promotes clarity. Anything that improves clarity also enhances *Vata*. The influence on *Pitta Dosha* stays unaffected.

Effect on Mala^[16] (Body wastes)

The property will cause dryness of *Mala* (Body waste) by removing or absorbing moisture. This will result in obstructed bowels with a decreased rate of removal. Clearness quality removes moisture and fluidity from excreta, particularly from feces, and dries it. Clearness makes the stools dry, devoid of liquidity, and firm, which aids in curing conditions like diarrhea or in other conditions where there is an excessive release of fluids in the form of excreta. This clarity quality can be used as a treatment in the form of foods and medications.

Effect on Tissues^[17]

Clearness quality scrapes tissues remove extra fluidity from tissues, and promotes wound healing. The ability to remove stickiness from tissue is known as clarity. When there is excessive stagnation of fluids in tissues leading to the build-up of pressure within tissues and hampering the smooth conduct of tissue functions that fluid, as well as the deposit of excess wastes and unnecessary tissue, should be removed. Clearness-quality foods and drugs relieve congestion in tissues and channels by removing fluid buildup and exfoliating tissues.

Even in wounds and ulcers, we might detect a lot of congestion and the accumulation of inflammatory fluids and undesirable tissues near the injury. Clearness medicines and diets help to clear fluids and congestion, scrap tissues, and speed up wound healing.

Effect on Srotus^[18] (Body Channels)

Increased *Kapha* levels in tissues and channels promote fluid accumulation and congestion. Clearness quality raises *Vata*, which is opposed to *Kapha*, and removes both *Kapha* and the congestion. Clearness is used to remove congestion and obstructions caused by increased sliminess and stickiness from *Kapha*, *Ama*, and Fat tissue. When blockages and congestion are removed, channels open up. This allows for the free movement of nutrients and vital components throughout the body. Even in this way, clarity quality assists in treating and eliminating undesired fluids and tissue accumulation in the body.

Effect on Manas^[19]

It is important to recognize that this characteristic has an impact on *Manas* because it reduces moisture,

which causes dryness. Loss of moisture, which keeps the person more focused, alert, and high in spirit until they are using their energy level at its best. However, the mind will get fatigued and lethargic as a result of a drop in energy levels when the energy runs out.

Effect of excessive consumption

Excessive consumption of these types of foods causes excessive loss of tissues and fluidity in the body, as well as excessive drying of feces, which leads to disorders such as constipation. Excessive clarity also results in an unnatural increase in *Vata*. Excessive clearness can completely eliminate its opponent feature in the body, namely sliminess, which is required for many bodily activities. However, if this cleansing activity increases as a result of an unnatural rise in clearness quality, normal tissues are scraped off, as well as protective fluids required for physiological processes. This leads to tissue damage, which causes a pathological rise in *Vata*. This *Vata* further damages tissues, resulting in many *Vata* diseases as well as a loss of strength, vigor, and immunity.

Examples of herbs having the property of *Vishad Guna* acting on different systems of the body

Digestive - *Nimb* (*Azadirachta indica*), *Khadir* (*Acacia catechu*), *Meshshurangi* (*Gymnema sylvestre*), *Latakasturi* (*Abelmoschus moschatus*), *Dadima* (*Punica granatum*), *Bhandir* (*Clerodendrum infortunatum*), *Triphala* (*Terminalia chebula*, *Embelia officinalis*, *Terminalia bellerica*).

Endocrine - *Patha* (*Cissampelos pareira*), *Devdar* (*Cydrus deodara*), *Dhanyak* (*Coriandrum sativum*), *Kanchnar* (*Bahunia variegata*), *Karela* (*Momordica charantia*), *Bhandir* (*Clerodendrum infortunatum*)

Urinary - *Khadir* (*Acacia catechu*), *Vat* (*Ficus benghalensis*), *Udumber* (*Ficus glomerata*), *Pipal* (*Ficus religiosa*), *Plaksh* (*Ficus lacor*)

Reproductive - *Kustha* (*Saussurea lappa*), *Elvaluk* (*Prunus cerasus*), *Kadamba* (*Neolamarckia cadamba*) *Shwetark* (*Calotropis gegenticum*), *Katphal* (*Myrica esculenta*), *Lodhra* (*Symplocos racemosa*), *Ashok* (*Saraca indica*)

Nervous/Sensory - *Jyotishmati* (*Celestrus peniculatus*), *Vidang* (*Embllica ribes*), *Apamargbeej* (*Achyrenthus aspera*), *Aparajita* (*Clitoria ternatea*), *Shigru Beej*

(*Moringa oleifera*), Kutki (*Picrorhiza currova*), Guggul (*Commiphora mukul*), Katphal (*Myrica esculenta*)

Integumentary - Bhringraj (*Eclipta alba*), Nimb (*Azadirachta indica*), Jati (*Jasminum officinale*), Madyantakia (*Lawsonia inermis*), Arjun (*Terminalia arjuna*), Sariva (*Hemidesmus indicus*), Manjistha (*Rubia cordifolia*), Asan (*Pterocarpus marsupium*), Palash (*Butea monosperma*), Irimeda (*Acacia farnesiana*)

Muscular/Skeletal - Yava (*Hordeum vulgare*), Dadima (*Punica granatum*), Ashok (*Saraca indica*), Shal (*Shorea robusta*), Shirish (*Albizia lebbek*), Shastik.

Hematopoietic/Lymphatic - Manjistha (*Rubia cordifolia*), Haritaki (*Terminalia chebula*), Guduchi (*Tinospora cordifolia*), Kesar (*Crocus sativus*), Lodhra (*Symplocos racemosa*), Sariva (*Hemidesmus indicus*), Mamajjak (*Enicostemma littorale*).

DISCUSSION

The concept of "Guna" or qualities in both philosophical and Ayurvedic frameworks reveals a rich interplay between theoretical principles and practical applications. In philosophy, *Gunas* are understood as inherent qualities dependent on matter, characterized by their lack of independent causation and action. The *Vaisheshika Darshan* describes *Gunas* as matter-dependent, causeless in their combination, and variable in their properties, while the *Samkhya* philosophy highlights their non-action and lack of independent qualities. These explanations highlight the fundamental part that *Gunas* plays in determining the characteristics of material things and how they interact.

Ayurveda expands on this philosophical foundation by categorizing *Gunas* in practical terms. For instance, *Vishad Guna*, or the quality of clarity, is particularly significant in Ayurvedic medicine. *Vishad Guna* is identified by its ability to counteract excess stickiness (*Kapha*) in the body, thus playing a crucial role in maintaining balance. This quality facilitates the elimination of excess moisture and fluidity, promoting the clearing of obstructions and aiding in tissue repair. In various body systems, such as digestive, endocrine, nervous, Integumentary, muscular, lymphatic urinary, and reproductive, *Vishad Guna* helps manage conditions characterized by excess *Kapha* and sliminess, thus improving overall bodily functions.

The Ayurvedic classification of *Gunas* into categories such as *Gurvadi Guna* and *Paradi Guna* provides a detailed framework for understanding their roles in health and disease. For example, *Vishad Guna* impact on *Vata* and *Kapha dosha* illustrates its therapeutic potential in treating conditions like congestion and fluid accumulation. By promoting clarity and reducing excess moisture, *Vishad Guna* contributes to improved tissue health and effective waste management.

Overall, the study of *Gunas* bridges philosophical concepts with practical applications, offering a comprehensive approach to understanding their influence on health and disease. This integrated perspective enhances our ability to apply traditional Ayurvedic principles to modern therapeutic practices, ensuring a balanced approach to health management.

CONCLUSION

The concept of "Guna," or qualities, as this is understood in Ayurvedic and philosophical contexts, represents an advanced knowledge of the characteristics and roles that affect matter and its relationships. *Guna* is defined philosophically by their qualities or role in action, their causelessness, and their dependence on matter. This concept is seen in various philosophical systems, including *Samkhya*, where *Gunas* are represented as devoid of independent activity and dependent on matter. These characteristics are expounded upon in further detail by Ayurvedic viewpoints, which see them as essential to both functional and physical facets of health. For example, the clarity quality known as *Vishad Guna* is essential to the removal of excess stickiness (*Kapha*) and supports body functioning by removing blockages and assisting in the healing of wounds. It affects many different systems, including the reproductive, endocrine, urinary, and digestive. *Vishad Guna* capacity to eliminate excess fluidity and moisture is essential for improving the body's inherent processes and controlling *Kapha*-related diseases. Understanding these *Gunas* highlights the significance of maintaining a balance between these attributes for the best possible well-being and offers insightful information on their applications in health and medicine. Both conventional and modern techniques can benefit from these insights to enhance therapy practices and health outcomes by thoroughly analyzing their distinctive features and implications.

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How to cite this article: Mukesh Jangir, Chandan Singh, Rajendra Prasad Purvia, Manoj Adlakha. A critical analysis of Vishad Guna; Exploring its properties and uses in Ayurveda. J Ayurveda Integr Med Sci 2024;11:137-142.

<http://dx.doi.org/10.21760/jaims.9.11.19>

Source of Support: Nil, **Conflict of Interest:** None declared.
