

AN INSIGHTFUL EXPOSITION ON *SARVAUṢADHI* *GUṆA KALPAKAM*: A LESS FAMILIAR COMPENDIUM ON AYURVEDIC MATERIA MEDICA

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ABSTRACT

The plants, metals, minerals and animal products have been in vogue since centuries for the prevention, management and cure of illness of human kind. *Nighaṅṭu* have added much to the indigenous pharmacopeia in addition to the inherent knowledge of Vedic and *Samhitā* periods. Moreover, eminent scholars of modern era have significantly contributed to the enrichment of Ayurvedic pharmacopeia through systematic documentation and presentation of information in user-friendly manner for easy browsing. *Sarvaushadhi Guṇa Kalpakam* is one such unique contribution of modern period on Ayurvedic Materia Medica available in Telugu Script. An attempt has been made to place a brief account on the methodology and contents of the text that would facilitate the scientists, physicians, and research scholars for proper utilization of this knowledge.

Introduction

Background -Through the continuous process of learning, the knowledge of *Āyurvēda* has expanded further with laying down of fundamentals and concepts and systematization in classical texts. Present form of *Āyurvēda* is the outcome of continued scientific inputs that has gone into the evolution of its principles, theories and guidelines of healthy living and disease management. *Ayurvedic Pharmacopeia* is enriched with huge number of plants, metals, minerals, animal products for medicinal as well as cosmetic purposes

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besides large number of dietary and nutritional supplements. The *Pharmacoeipia* has been continuously added with new drugs and components in the course of time. Adding to the ancient knowledge prevailing since *Vedic* (3000 BC to 1000 BC), *Saṁhitā* (1500 BC to 500 AD), *Nighaṅṭu* and medieval periods (500 AD to 1900 AD), the scholars of modern period have enormously contributed for systematic documentation and presentation of the merits of *Ayurvedic* drugs and formulations in a scientific manner. *Sarvaṣadhi Guṇa Kalpakam* is one among such contributions of modern period on *Ayurvedic* materia medica.

Objectives and methods: Prime objectives of this paper encompass the following issues.

- ∞ To present an account on the lesser known *Telugu* text on *Ayurvedic* materia medica and reveal its contemporary relevance.
- ∞ Positioning of thoughtful insight of author on the need of contribution of such compendia in regional scripts and languages.
- ∞ Exposition of hidden knowledge about the contents of the text viz. various medicinal plants, minerals, animal products, aromatic substances, diet etc. of medicinal value.
- ∞ To convey the basic knowledge and information on core issues concerning these drugs, diet practices cited in the book, which may serve as a base for further research and re validation, especially in the formulation of strategy for developing appropriate dosage forms for chronic and refractory diseases.

Historical Account

Author and period: The text was contributed by *Puvvada Pattabhi Ramarao*, published at *Venu Gana Mudra Sala* in the year 1912. The compendium has presented information of Sanskrit citations in *Telugu* script followed by explanation in *Telugu* language.

Contemporary relevance: The book starts with a detailed preamble by author named “*Avataraṇikā*”. In the preamble (*Avataraṇikā*) the author has made an account on philosophical aspects of *Āyurvēda* and difficulties encountered by health care providers, physicians different regions of his period, owing to the non availability of medical literature in regional languages and scripts as may texts are available only in Sanskrit and only few may perhaps understand this language.

It is further stated that in spite of these difficulties many physicians contributed

significantly in preserving the tradition and heritage of *Āyurvēda* transmitted by their ancestors through non-codified (oral transmission) and codified knowledge in regional scripts. The author has stressed on the need of accessibility of medical books in regional languages and scripts in a lucid manner that help medical professionals a lot in better understanding of the contemporary universal trends and translate them into their medical practice.

Methodology of the Text

Presentation: The author in the preamble stated that he has followed well-known texts viz. *Dhanvantari Nighaṇṭu*, *Dravya Ratna Mālā*, *Nighaṇṭu Rājam* etc. while formulating his work. The text possesses an index of contents (*Viśaya sūcikā*) arranged in *Telugu* alphabetical order (*Akārādi Kramam*). Similar to other compendia on materia medica of medieval and modern period, this book also presents information in a systematic manner and classified the contents in 17 different sections with a prefix indicating the specific contents and a common suffix “*Guṇa Mañjarī*”. The script of *Sanskrit* verses run in *Telugu* language with *Telugu* translation. In few contexts *Tamil* names of certain plants have been cited in both *Telugu* and *Tamil* scripts.

Core contents: The book is a compendium of pharmacological actions & therapeutic uses of various medicinal plants, minerals, animal products, aromatic substances, diet etc. of medicinal value. The book also highlights about the synonyms of plants, metals, minerals and other substances of medicinal and nutritive value. The Ayurvedic pharmacodynamic profiles, pharmacological actions of medicinal plants, animal products, food articles etc have been systematically classified and arranged in 17 sections that facilitate easy browsing of requisite strata of information.

Sections of the Text: The sequential arrangements of various sections of the text (Table-1) comprise:

1. *Auśadhi Guṇa Mañjarī* (Medicinal plants, vegetables, fruits etc.),
2. *Sugandhī Dravyaguṇa Mañjarī* (Aromatic Plants, Animal Products and Minerals)
3. *Lavaṇa Guṇa Mañjarī* (Salts, Alkaline Material)
4. *Lauha Guṇa Mañjarī* (Metals, Minerals, Animal and Marine Products)
5. *Pānīya Guṇa Mañjarī* (Water sources)
6. *Kṣīra Guṇa Mañjarī* (Milk and its products)

7. *Dadhi Guṇa Mañjarī* (sources of curd)
8. *Takra Guṇa Mañjarī* (sources of Buttermilk)
9. *Navanīta Guṇa Mañjarī* (sources of butter)
10. *Ghṛta Guṇa Mañjarī* (sources of clarified butter-ghee)
11. *Taila Guṇa Mañjarī* (sources of edible oils and oils of medicinal value)
12. *Madya Guṇa Mañjarī* (Fermented and alcohol based preparations)
13. *Mūtra Guṇa Mañjarī* (sources of urine of therapeutic value)
14. *Madhura Dravya Guṇa Mañjarī* (Sugarcane & other sweet products like sugar, honey)
15. *Dhānya Guṇa Mañjarī* (crops and food grains like pulses, millets.)
16. *Āhāra Guṇa Mañjarī* (variety of food preparation and dietary articles of vegetable and animal source) and
17. *Saṅkīrṇa Guṇa Mañjarī* (Miscellaneous issues related to health)

Table-1: Sections and Contents of *Sarvaśadhi Guṇa Kalpakam* at a Glance

Sl. No.	Chapters/sections	Contents/information
1.	<i>Auśadhi Guṇa Mañjarī</i>	The synonyms, pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of medicinal plants, vegetables, fruits etc.
2.	<i>Sugandhī Dravyaguṇa Mañjarī</i>	The synonyms, pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of aromatic plants, animal products and minerals.
3.	<i>Lavaṇa Guṇa Mañjarī</i>	The synonyms, pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of various salts, alkaline material of therapeutic value.
4.	<i>Lauha Guṇa Mañjarī</i>	The synonyms, pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of various metals, minerals, animal and marine products of therapeutic value.
5.	<i>Pānīya Guṇa Mañjarī</i>	The synonyms, pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of various sources of water, methods of purification and process of water for preventive and therapeutic purposes.

6. *Kṣīra Guṇa Mañjarī* The synonyms, pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of various sources of milk and its products.
7. *Dadhī Guṇa Mañjarī* The synonyms, pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of various sources of curd and guidelines for consumption of curd.
8. *Takra Guṇa Mañjarī* The synonyms, pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of various sources by products of butter milk.
9. *Navanīta Guṇa Mañjarī* The synonyms, pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of various sources of butter.
10. *Ghṛta Guṇa Mañjarī* The synonyms, pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of various sources of clarified butter (ghee).
11. *Taila Guṇa Mañjarī* The synonyms, pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of various sources of oils of plant and animal origin.
12. *Madya Guṇa Mañjarī* The synonyms, pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of various sources of fermented products and alcohol based preparations, guidelines for their consumption, toxic effects of improper consumption etc.
13. *Mūtra Guṇa Mañjarī* The synonyms, pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of various sources of urine of medicinal value.
14. *Madhura Dravya Guṇa Mañjarī* The pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of various products and byproducts of sugarcane & other sweet products like sugar, honey and its varieties etc.

15. *Dhānya Guṇa Mañjarī* The synonyms, pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of various varieties of crops and food grains like pulses, millets.
16. *Āhāra Guṇa Mañjarī* The Pharmacodynamics, pharmacological and therapeutic uses of various varieties of food preparation and dietary articles of vegetable and animal source. Methods of preparation of different food items and nutritional supplements, method of their administration for the prevention and management of different diseases.
17. *Saṅkīrṇa Guṇa Mañjarī* Miscellaneous issues comprising of highlights on various preventive health practices, daily and seasonal regimens, do's and don'ts for health maintenance, prevention of disease, properties of wind currents of different directions, properties of certain food articles, pharmacological actions of certain panchakarma procedures and so on.

Discussion

About 65% of population in India is reported to have been using *Āyurvēda* and medicinal plants help to meet their primary health care needs (WHO traditional medicine Strategy 2002 - 2005, Document/ WHO/ EDM/ TRM/ 2002) and the safety of this vibrant tradition is attributed to time-tested use and textual references and supported by scientific studies (Evidence Base of *Āyurvēda*, CCRAS, 2008, Department of AYUSH, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, Government of India). Like other systems of ancient Indian learning, *Āyurvēda* is discovered through most suitable evidence based sources (*Pramāṇa*) viz.

1. *Pratyakṣa* (direct perception)
2. *Anumāna* (logical inference)
3. *Āptōpadēśa* (verbal and authentic documentary testimony)
4. *Yukti* (experimental evidence)

In medieval and modern periods *Āyurvēda* is further expanded at a large as a

result of continuous additions from experimental research outcome, experiential knowledge and documented as codified texts. *Sarvaushadhi Guṇa Kalpakam* add to such works of modern period on Ayurvedic materia medica.

In the current scenario physicians, scientists of various disciplines, research scholars and pharmaceutical industry may utilize the knowledge of *Sarvaushadhi Guṇa Kalpakam* for the development of safe, cost-effective, quality assured and clinically proven drugs and developing appropriate dosage forms for chronic and refractory diseases and to promote the sustainable utilization of indigenous medical knowledge for the benefit of mankind. Moreover as stressed by the author of *Sarvaushadhi Guṇa Kalpakam* there is a great need of accessibility of medical books in regional languages and scripts in a lucid manner which is pivotal for better understanding of the contemporary universal trends and sensitization of masses across the country for better utilization of merits of *Āyurvēda* at large.

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सारांश

आयुर्वेदिक द्रव्यगुणविज्ञान के प्रचलित ग्रन्थ “सर्वौषधि गुण कल्पकम्” का एक ज्ञानपूर्ण विवेचन

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एन. हरिप्रिया, एम.एम. राव, राजेश सिंह एवं निखिल जिरांकलगीकर

मनुष्यों का रोगों से बचाव एवं उपचार करने के लिए सदियों से वानस्पतिक, धात्विय, खनिज एवं जैव उत्पादों का प्रचलन रहा है। वैदिक एवं संहिताकालीन ज्ञान के अतिरिक्त निघण्टु ग्रन्थों ने स्वदेशी फार्माकोपिया को समृद्ध किया है। इसके अतिरिक्त सूचनाओं के सुनियोजित प्रलेखन एवं प्रस्तुतीकरण के द्वारा आधुनिक काल के वैज्ञानिकों ने आयुर्वेदिक फार्माकोपिया को समृद्ध करने में उल्लेखनीय योगदान दिया है। इसी प्रकार तेलुगु लिपि में उपलब्ध “सर्वौषधि गुण कल्पकम्” ग्रन्थ आयुर्वेदिक द्रव्यगुण विज्ञान में आधुनिक काल का अद्वितीय योगदान है। इस ग्रन्थ की विषयवस्तु एवं विधियों का संक्षिप्त विवेचन प्रस्तुत करने का प्रयास किया गया है, जोकि वैज्ञानिकों, चिकित्सकों एवं अनुसन्धानकर्ताओं को इस ज्ञान का समुचित उपयोग करने में सहयोग प्रदान करेगा।