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Protocol for an Observational Study on the Correlation Between *Dosha Kshaya-Vriddhi* and Taste Preferences (*Shad-Rasa*) as Preventive Measures in Ayurveda

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Abstract

Introduction:

The balance of *dosha* in the human body is central to Ayurveda, influencing an individual's health and well-being. *Dosha* imbalances, particularly *Kshaya* (reduction) and *Vriddhi* (increase), can significantly affect physiological functions. One of the key manifestations of *dosha* imbalance is the individual's preference or aversion towards the six tastes (*Shad-Rasa*). This study aims to explore the correlation between *dosha* imbalances and these preferences, and investigate how this relationship can serve as a preventive measure in *Ayurveda* treatment protocols.

Methods:

This observational cross-sectional study will be conducted on a sample of individuals diagnosed with varying *dosha* imbalances (*Kshaya* and *Vriddhi*). Participants will undergo a detailed assessment through a structured questionnaire to assess their aversion and liking towards the six tastes. *Dosha*

imbalances will be determined based on clinical examination, history, and standardized *Ayurveda* diagnostic criteria. Statistical analysis will be used to explore the correlation between *dosha* imbalances and taste preferences.

Results:

The study is expected to reveal a significant correlation between specific *dosha* imbalances (*Kshaya* and *Vriddhi*) and aversion or liking toward particular tastes. A detailed analysis will highlight the patterns of preferences in individuals with dominant *dosha* imbalances, offering insights into the physiological link between *dosha* status and taste sensitivity.

Discussion:

The findings of this study could have practical implications in *Ayurveda* preventive and therapeutic practices. Understanding the correlation between *dosha* imbalances and taste preferences could allow practitioners to tailor dietary recommendations more effectively, providing an individualized approach to maintaining *dosha* balance. This could enhance the preventative aspects of *Ayurveda* treatments, improving patient outcomes by addressing imbalances before they manifest as disease.

Keywords: *Dosha* Imbalance*, Kshaya-Vriddhi, Shad-Rasa, Taste Preference*, Questionnaire validation

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Introduction

In Ayurveda, the body's balance is regulated by three primary *dosha—Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*. When these *dosha* are disturbed, they result in imbalances that can lead to a variety of health issues. Among the most commonly observed imbalances are *Kshaya* (reduction) and *Vriddhi* (increase), which directly affect an individual's physiological functions. These imbalances are also believed to influence sensory perceptions, including the preference or aversion towards specific tastes, referred to as *Shad-Rasa*.

The six tastes—sweet, sour, salty, bitter, pungent, and astringent—are fundamental components of *Ayurveda* dietary recommendations. Ayurveda posits that consuming the appropriate tastes in accordance with an individual's *dosha* constitution plays a key role in maintaining health and preventing disease. Therefore, understanding how *dosha* imbalances relate to taste preferences could enhance the precision of *Ayurveda* treatments, particularly in preventive care.

This study seeks to explore the relationship between *dosha* imbalances (*Kshaya* and *Vriddhi*) and the liking or aversion towards the six tastes. The findings could provide insights into how *Shad-Rasa* can be strategically incorporated into dietary recommendations for individuals based on their *dosha* imbalances, thereby improving treatment outcomes.

Aim and Objectives:

Aim:

To explore the correlation between *dosha* imbalances (*Kshaya* and *Vriddhi*) and individuals' preferences (aversion or liking) towards the six tastes (*Shad-Rasa*) and to assess its applicability as a preventive measure in *Ayurveda* treatment.

Objectives:

Primary Objective:

- To determine the correlation between individuals' aversions/likings towards specific *Shad-Rasa and* their *dosha* imbalances (*Kshaya-Vriddhi*).

Secondary Objectives:

- To evaluate the *Kshaya* (decrease) and *Vriddhi* (increase) of *dosha* in healthy individuals using a validated *Vikriti* measuring scale [6].

- To develop and validate a questionnaire based on the six tastes (*Shad-Rasa*) as described in *Ayurveda* classical texts.

- To assess the aversion and liking of specific *Shad-Rasa* in individuals.
- To apply the findings as preventive measures for personalized treatment in Ayurveda, optimizing dietary recommendations and therapeutic interventions.

Research Question

Is there a significant correlation between the aversions/likings of specific *Shad-Rasa and* the *Kshaya-Vriddhi* (increase or decrease) of *dosha* in individuals?

Hypothesis

Null Hypothesis (H₀):

There is no significant correlation between *dosha* imbalances (*Kshaya-Vriddhi*) and the aversion or liking towards the six tastes (*Shad-Rasa*).

Alternate Hypothesis (H₁):

There is a significant correlation between *dosha* imbalances (*Kshaya-Vriddhi*) and the aversion or liking towards the six tastes (*Shad-Rasa*).

Methodology

This study will be divided into three main phases:

1. **Participant Recruitment:**

    A total of at least 100 healthy individuals will be recruited for this study. Participants will be selected based on the SAS criteria for healthy individuals, as defined by the Central Council for Research in *Ayurveda* Sciences (CCRAS). The inclusion criteria will ensure that only individuals who are considered physiologically balanced, without any significant health concerns, are chosen.

2. ***Dosha Kshaya-Vriddhi* Assessment:**

    The assessment of *dosha* imbalances (*Kshaya* and *Vriddhi*) will be conducted using a validated scale. The *Kshaya-Vriddhi* of the *dosha* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, and *Kapha*) in the recruited individuals will be evaluated using a detailed proforma based on the *Vikriti* scale of tri*dosha* diagnosis, a comprehensive tool that helps in determining the imbalances of each *dosha*. The evaluation will take into account the physiological, psychological, and behavioral characteristics that indicate *dosha* imbalances.

3. **Development and Validation of Questionnaire on *Shad-Rasa*:**

    A questionnaire will be designed to assess the participants' aversion or liking towards the six tastes (*Shad-Rasa*) as described in *Ayurveda* classical texts. An

extensive literature review will be conducted to identify references and detailed descriptions of *Shad-Rasa*, including their definitions, qualities (*Guna*), and actions (*Karma*) as per *Ayurveda* principles. Consultations with expert *Ayurveda* physicians will be conducted to ensure that the questionnaire accurately reflects the understanding of these tastes in the context of *dosha* imbalances. The final questionnaire will consist of items that explore the relationship between individual preferences for each *Shada-Rasa* and the corresponding *dosha* status (whether the *dosha* is in *Kshaya* or *Vriddhi*).

After evaluating the *Kshaya-Vriddhi* of *dosha*, the study will proceed as follows:

1. **Assessment of Aversion:**

   Individuals will be asked, based on the questionnaire, whether they have developed an aversion to any specific *Rasas* among the six tastes (*Shad-Rasa*).

2. **Assessment of Liking:**

   Individuals will be asked, based on the questionnaire, whether they have developed a liking for any specific *Rasas* among the *Shad-Rasa*.

3. **Correlation Analysis:**

   A correlation will be drawn between the individuals' aversions and likings towards specific *Rasas* and the particular *dosha Kshaya-Vriddhi* of each subject. This analysis will identify patterns that link *dosha* imbalances with taste preferences.

4. **Preventive Measure Application:**

   Based on the correlation findings, these preferences and imbalances will be used as a preventive measure to guide *Ayurveda* treatment. Personalized dietary and lifestyle recommendations will be suggested to the participants based on their *dosha* imbalance and taste preferences.

Inclusion Criteria

1. Subjects aged between 18 and 40 years, irrespective of gender, caste, race, and socioeconomic status.
2. Subjects who are willing to participate in the study.

Exclusion Criteria

1. Patients below 18 years or above 40 years of age.

2. Patients who are not willing to participate in the study.

3. Patients with functional abnormalities such as smell and taste disorders, anosmia, ageusia, any congenital disorders, or any other medical condition that affects taste.

4. Patients with infectious diseases such as tuberculosis or systemic diseases like bronchial asthma.

5. Pregnant or lactating women, and patients with a history of diabetes mellitus, hypertension, Addison's disease, Graves' disease, vitiligo, pernicious anemia, hyper or hypothyroidism, or any other chronic disorder.

6. Habitual smoking, drinking, or a history of any substance abuse.

Source of Data

1. **Literary Source**
   o Relevant information will be gathered from Ayurveda classics, commentaries, and modern literature. The data will be systematically compiled and analyzed.
   o Key reference: Patil SS et al., *Development and validation of Vikriti measuring scale − A pilot study*, IJAM KLEU, 2021, 2(2), 78-85.
   o Research articles and reviews on *dosha* assessment, the significance of *Shad-Rasa*, and their role in *Ayurveda* diagnosis and treatment.

2. **Clinical Source**
   o Participants will be recruited from various sources, including the college campus, hospital, or external locations. Only individuals who voluntarily agree to participate by signing an informed consent form and are willing to cooperate throughout the study will be selected.

Data Analysis

1. **Subjective Criteria**
   o **Vikriti Assessment:** Evaluation of *Dosha Kshaya-Vriddhi* using the *Tridosha* diagnosis scale.
   o **Questionnaire Development and Validation:** Creation and validation of a questionnaire to assess

participants' preferences and aversions to specific *Rasa*.

2. **Objective Criteria**
   o **Vikriti Measurement:** Quantitative assessment of *Dosha Kshaya-Vriddhi* using the validated *Vikriti* measuring scale.
   o **Statistical Analysis:** Correlation analysis between *Dosha* states and rasa preferences/aversions using appropriate statistical tools.

Preventive Measures

- **Dietary Recommendations:** Personalized dietary adjustments based on *dosha* imbalances and taste preferences.
- **Preventive Strategies:** *Dosha*-specific guidelines and seasonal adjustments for maintaining balance.
- **Lifestyle Modifications:** Recommendations for daily routines and regimens to support overall health.

Anticipated Outcomes

- A correlation will be established between individuals' specific aversions and preferences for

particular *Rasas* (tastes) and the *Dosha Kshaya-Vriddhi* (imbalance) in each participant. This will help clarify the connection between taste preferences and doshic imbalances, offering insights into individualized health patterns.

- The study aims to identify early indicators of *dosha* imbalances through taste preferences. This approach will provide an opportunity for early interventions before the onset of disease, supporting the modern healthcare shift towards preventive care rather than reactive treatment.

Expected Outcomes

- The findings will facilitate the development of a more targeted and personalized approach in *Ayurveda* dietary recommendations and treatments based on taste preferences, enhancing the precision of therapeutic interventions.
- The study will offer preventive measure applications, allowing Ayurveda to take a more proactive role in maintaining health and preventing disease by leveraging early detection of *dosha*

imbalances through taste preferences.

Significance of the Study

- Ayurveda, despite its ancient roots, continues to provide valuable insights into personalized healthcare. This study highlights the potential of Ayurveda in not only treating ailments but also preventing them by identifying early signs of *dosha* imbalances. By integrating modern research methods with traditional knowledge, this study will contribute to bridging the gap between *Ayurveda* practices and contemporary preventive medicine, thus promoting holistic and personalized healthcare.

Table 1: Timeline of the Proposed Research Work

Task	Date	Status	Text
Phase 1: Literature Review & Questionnaire Preparation	December 2024 to January 2025	Complete	Conduct literature review, draft questionnaire, plan validation process.
Phase 2: Questionnaire Development And Validation	January 2025 to March 2025	In Progress	Validate and statistically test the questionnaire
Phase 3: Recruitment & Initial Assessments	April 2025 to July 2025	Upcoming	Recruit, screen participants, assess vikriti, administer questionnaires
Phase 4: Data Analysis	August 2025 to November 2025	Awaiting Commencement	Clean, validate, and analyze data statistically
Phase 5: Preventive Measures	December 2025 to February 2026	Awaiting Commencement	Develop dietary and lifestyle recommendations
Phase 6: Writing and Submission	March 2026 to June 2026	Awaiting Commencement	Draft, revise, and finalize thesis, prepare for defense

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