



Review Article

Rediscovering Unique Insights: Comparative Analysis of Manuscript *Dravyagunaaguna* with the *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha*

Vaishnavi Shankar Gore^{1*}, Jyoti Rathi²

1. Assistant Professor, Samhita Siddhant and Sanskrit, Mahatma Gandhi Ayurveda College Hospital and Research Centre (AIHER(DU)), Salod, Wardha, India.
2. Professor, Samhita Siddhant and Sanskrit, Mahatma Gandhi Ayurveda College Hospital and Research Centre (AIHER(DU)), Salod, Wardha, India.

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Abstract

Introduction: Ayurvedic manuscript contains significant information; however, a large proportion of these manuscripts are not published. The work *Dravyagunaaguna* written by Kavi Trimalla discusses the classification and characteristics of *Ahara Dravya* (foods). On the other hand, the *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha* by Acharya Vagbhata also provides the basic concepts of Ayurveda and dietetics. **Objective:** To comparatively analyse the content of *Dravyagunaaguna* with the *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha* to identify similarities, differences, and unique contributions. **Materials and Methods:** A comparative literary study was conducted using the manuscripts *Dravyagunaaguna* and *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha*. The analysis was performed through verse-by-verse and word-to-word comparison. A grading scale (0–4) was developed to assess the degree of similarity and difference in meaning, terminology, and principles. **Results:** It was found that 50.01% of the content in *Dravyagunaaguna* has uniqueness, and there is only 1.10% similarity that exists between *Dravyagunaaguna* and *Sutrasthana*. Approximately 23.23% of the content is slightly altered, whereas 17.12% of it contains similar concepts expressed with the help of different terms. Another 8.56% shows different concepts. **Conclusion:** These results clearly suggested the uniqueness and distinctiveness of Kavi Trimalla in Ayurvedic dietetics. *Dravyagunaaguna* provides a comprehensive classification of *Ahara Dravya*. The importance of researching the unknown texts of Ayurvedic literature cannot be underestimated.

Keywords: Manuscript, Dravyagunaaguna, Ashtanga sangraha, Sutrasthana, Kavi Trimalla, Ahara Dravya

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Introduction

Ayurveda, the science of life, has a rich history founded on its fundamental principles.. In ancient times, before the development of writing, knowledge was transmitted orally from one generation to the next. (1)

The term "manuscript" is derived from Latin words Manu (hand) and scriptus (writing), meaning a document written by hand. (2) Any handwritten document with significant, scientific, historical, philosophical, and aesthetic value. (3)

Ancient *Vaidyas* used to share their knowledge on various materials, creating essential manuscripts to preserve texts. These manuscripts are crucial because Ayurveda is mainly based on texts like the *Brihatrayee* and *Laghutrayee*, which are available today

only because of the study and preservation of these manuscripts. However, many *Ayurvedic* texts are still unpublished and hidden in manuscript form. (4)

The study of manuscripts is multi-dimensional, involving the principles (*Siddhant*), science (*Shashtra*), and application (*Iyavahara*) of Ayurveda. (5) The oldest manuscripts are written in *Brahmi* and *Kharosthi* scripts, with *Brahmi* being the most widely used in India. Later, the *Brahmi* script evolved into regional variations. For example:

North India: *Devanagari* and other regional languages.

South India: *Grantha*, *Telugu*, *Kannada*, *Malayalam*, and *Tamil*. (6)

Different materials were used for writing manuscripts, such as:

Writing Surfaces: Rock (*Shilalekha*), paper, copper plates (*Tamrapatra*), palm leaves (*Taali Patra Grantha*), birch bark (*Bhurjapatra*), and aloe wood bark (*Sanchapat*).

Instruments: The tool used for writing was the *Lekhani* (stylus), a sharp instrument used for carving. Quills made from porcupine

* Corresponding Author:

Vaishnavi Shankar Gore

Assistant Professor, Samhita Siddhant and Sanskrit, Mahatma Gandhi Ayurveda College Hospital and Research Centre (AIHER(DU)), Salod, Wardha India.

Email Id: vaishnavigore28@gmail.com

spines, bamboo twigs, or brushes for painting were used as instruments. (7)

Manuscripts were sometimes bound with threads, especially when written on palm leaves or birch bark. (8)

Interestingly, only about 2% of Ayurvedic manuscripts have been published. (9)

These manuscripts are susceptible to damage from improper handling, dust, pollution, insects, and fungi. Hence, studying and maintaining them is essential since they contain ancient wisdom and intellectual heritage. Through such a Study, we safeguard Ayurveda's fundamental principles and save the rich literary tradition of this ancient science. (10)

In Ayurveda, *Ahara* (food) is considered one of the pillars of life. (11) It is important for human existence, as it influences health, vitality, intelligence, and satisfaction. In today's world, lifestyle diseases are often linked to improper dietary practices. The Study of *Ahara Varga* (food categories) is thus essential for understanding health maintenance and prolonging life. (12)

In the present era, lifestyle disorders are primarily the result of improper dietary habits. A balanced diet is vital in maintaining health and increasing life expectancy. Therefore, the Study of *Ahara Varga* (classification of food substances) is significant.

With this in mind, a manuscript titled *Dravyagunaaguna*, authored by Kavi Trimalla(13), was selected for study. This manuscript elaborates on the concept of *Shadrasa* (six tastes), various food categories (*Ahara Dravya Varga*), properties, and uses. (14)

Similarly, the *Sutrasthana* of the Ayurvedic classic *Ashtanga Sangraha* also provides comprehensive descriptions of *Shadrasa* and *Ahara Dravya Varga*, particularly in chapters such as *Ayushkamaya Adhyaya*, *Rasabhedhiya Adhyaya*, *Dravadravyavidnyaniya Adhyaya*, and *Annaswarupa Vidnyaniya Adhyaya*(15)

Ashtanga Sangraha, compiled by collecting information from various Ayurvedic classics, stands out for its clarity, relevance, and organization. It avoids unnecessary repetition, objectionable or ambiguous statements, and presents the subject matter in a manner suitable for contemporary understanding. (16) The *Sutrasthana* section is the most important part of *Ashtanga Sangraha*. (17)

The compelling content of the *Dravyagunaaguna* manuscript sparked curiosity and interest, leading to the decision to undertake a study.

Review of literature

The manuscript was found in Anandashram library, Pune, and a description of the manuscript was found in the catalogue of the Government collection of manuscript *Vaidyakshastra* Manuscript code 4-38

Title-*Dravyagunaaguna*

Author – Kavi Trimalla

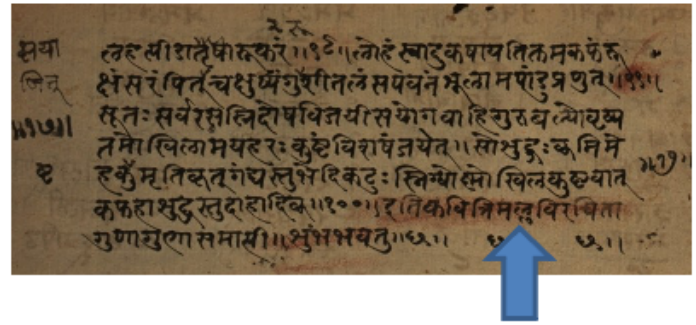
Size- 21*12 cms

PAGES – 32 C (Complete)

Verses -100

Dravyagunaaguna is the title of the manuscript, which is mentioned at the end of the text.

Figure 1: Shows colophon of the manuscript



The colophon contains the concluding portion of the manuscript where the title *Dravyagunaaguna* is mentioned, which may also include additional scribal notes, manuscript completion details or concluding remarks. This section is important for confirming the title, authenticity of the manuscript.

The subject matter is available on both sides of the folios in the selected manuscript.

The manuscript systematically categorizes food into the following groups:

- *Shadrasa* (six tastes)
- *Jalvarga* (water classification)
- *Dugdhadadhinavneet Varga* (dairy products)
- *Anna Varga* (grains and cereals)
- *Mansa Varga* (meat)
- *Patrashakphal Varga* (leafy vegetables and fruits)
- *Ikshu-khand Varga* (sugarcane and its derivatives)
- *Tail Varga* (oils)
- *Drakshadiphal Varga* (grape-like fruits)
- *Shunthyadi Varga* (ginger and related substances)
- *Siddha Anna Varga* (processed foods)
- *Madya Varga* (alcoholic beverages)
- *Madhuvara* (honey)
- *Abhyanga Varga* (oil massage and related procedures)
- *Tambuladi Varga* (betel leaf and related substances)
- *Swarnadi Dhatu Varga* (metals and other minerals)

The handwriting is bold and clear, and the punctuation marks are applied inconsistently. Headings and colophons are distinctly marked with red pigment for visual emphasis. From folio 7b onward, the script becomes thinner, indicating a possible shift in the writing material or the involvement of a different scribe. This change is evident through variations in handwriting style.

The manuscript uses double vertical strokes for punctuation, though their application is inconsistent. The names of the *Ahara Varga* and the *Shloka* numbers are highlighted in red ink. A unique religious symbol is inscribed at the end of the manuscript, signifying its spiritual relevance.

Ashtanga Sangraha

Author: *Vagbhata*, a sage-physician, likely from around the 6th century CE.

Language: Classical Sanskrit, written in a more concise, versified (metrical) form than the prose-heavy *Ashtanga Hridaya*.

Incorporates teachings from *Charaka* and *Sushruta* but presents them in a structured way.

The *Ashtanga Sangraha* is divided into six sections (*Sthanas*), similar to classical Ayurvedic texts like *Charaka Samhita* and *Sushruta Samhita*:

- *Sutrasthana* (Foundational principles of Ayurveda)
- *Sharirasthana* (Anatomy and physiology)
- *Nidanasthana* (Disease diagnosis)
- *Chikitsasthana* (Treatment methodologies)
- *Kalpasthana* (Toxicology and formulations)
- *Uttarasthana* (Specialized topics, including ENT, geriatrics, and aphrodisiacs)

The *Sutrasthana* serves as the foundational section of *Ashtanga Sangraha*, explaining the core concepts of Ayurveda, including treatment principles, lifestyle recommendations, and dietetics..

It consists of 40 chapters that introduce essential Ayurvedic theories and practices.

Covers fundamental principles such as *Tridosha Siddhanta* (*Vata*, *Pitta*, *Kapha*), *Panchamahabhuta Siddhanta* (Five Elements Theory), and *Srotas* (Body Channels), diet (*Ahara*) and lifestyle (*Vihara*) in maintaining health, disease aetiology, classification, and treatment approaches in detail. Provides ethical guidelines for Ayurvedic practitioners and students.

The *Sutrasthana* section of the *Ashtanga Sangraha* also provides in-depth descriptions of these topics, including *Rasabhedhiya Adhyaya* (the chapter on the classification of tastes), *Dravdravyavijnaniya Adhyaya* (on the properties of medicinal substances), and *Annaswarupa Vijnaniyam Adhyaya* (on the nature of food).

Classification of *Ahara Dravya Varga* in *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha*

- *Shukadhanya* (Cereal grains like rice, wheat)
- *Shimbhidhanya* (Leguminous grains or pulses)
- *Krutanna Varga* (Processed or cooked foods)
- *Mamsa Varga* (Meat group)
- *Shaka Varga* (Vegetables classification)
- *Phala Varga* (Fruits classification)
- *Jalavarga* (Water and water-based substances)
- *Ksheervarga* (Milk and dairy products)
- *Ikshuvarga* (Sugarcane and sugarcane products)
- *Taila Varga* (Oil classification)
- *Madya Varga* (Alcoholic beverages classification)
- *Mutravarga* (Urine and urine-based therapeutic substances)(18)

This underutilization of ancient manuscripts is an issue that calls for greater scholarly attention. Manuscripts hold precious information across many subjects, including philosophy, literature, history, and medicine.

The relevance of this research lies in its ability to connect the dots between ancient literature and contemporary health practices. Ayurveda remains an integral part of health and wellness in India and globally. While holistic health becomes more popular, knowledge of the classical roots of *Ayurvedic* dietetics is even more crucial. The findings of this study will not only enhance our understanding of *Ayurvedic* dietary classifications. However, they

will also inform contemporary *Ayurvedic* practitioners and scholars on integrating ancient knowledge with current dietary needs.

In addition, this study emphasizes the necessity of further exploring India's rich collection of manuscripts. Through comparative examination of these ancient manuscripts, we can gain new insights that can guide the future of *Ayurvedic* medicine.

Aim and Objective

Aim - To study the *Dravyagunaaguna* manuscript in relation to the *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha*

Objective- To identify and analyse the similarities and differences in the content presented in the *Dravyagunaaguna* manuscript compared with the *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha*.

Material and Methodology

Material

- Manuscript "*Dravyagunaaguna*" was found in the catalogue "*Vaidyakshashtram*" and was collected from Anandashram, Pune. (Manuscript number S19-4/38)
- Ayurveda and Sanskrit *Shabdakosh*.
- *Ashtanga Sangraha* with available commentaries.
- Other texts of Ayurveda, such as *Charak Samhita*, *Sushrut Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hrudaya*
- other journals and the internet

Methodology

1. Collection of Manuscripts
 2. Comprehensive reading –division into sections was done
 3. Study of Manuscript- Interpretation of the content mentioned in the manuscript "*Dravyagunaaguna*"
 4. Comparative Analysis with content mentioned in *Sutrasthana* of *AshtangaSangraha*- Each section of the *Dravyagunaaguna* will be compared with the corresponding sections in the *Sutrasthana* on a verse-by-verse (*Shloka-by-Shloka*) basis. This is essential to ensure a detailed and accurate comparison.
 - a. Definitions, terminologies, properties, and synonyms were examined to identify both differences and similarities between the texts.
 - b. Each topic was analysed and compared *Shloka* by *Shloka*, focusing on the meaning of each verse.
 - c. A comparison scale was developed for assessment:
- Grade 0: Not Present in Text
- Grade 1: Different Meaning with changed Principles.
- Grade 2: Different Terminology, Same Meaning and Principles
- Grade 3: Minor Variations in terminology, Same Meaning
- Grade 4: Identical in Meaning and Wording

Observation and Results

About the Manuscript

Name of Author: *Kavi Trimalla*

Colophon Evidence: The author's name, "Kavi Trimalla" is mentioned at the end of the manuscript (colophon), the traditional place for such attributions in manuscripts.

Size and Dimensions: The manuscript measures 21 cm x 12 cm,

Folio Details: The text is organized across several folios, with folio 7b marking a change in handwriting style, and the last 10 folios exhibiting a completely different handwriting style, which might indicate either a change in scribes or a shift in the author's style over time.

Period: No specific period of Kavi Trimalla's writing is explicitly stated in the manuscript. However, internal evidence indicates that the style of writing and some of the words are similar in language and style to those of the 16th to 18th centuries. If stylistic comparison is made, it is logical to date the manuscript to the modern period, covering late medieval or early modern times.

Place: The manuscript does not directly specify a location

Internal Evidence

The manuscript provides several internal evidences to date its authorship and style, which help in constructing the history of both the text and its creator:

Writing Style and Handwriting

The text is written in Sanskrit using the *Devanagari* script. There is a noticeable change in handwriting style from folio 7b onwards, with the handwriting becoming thinner and slightly different in form (larger or thinner letters, but still legible). The writing style is horizontal and in the lengthwise direction, with adequate margins and alignment preserved at both sides of the folios. Red ink is used primarily in the *Ahara Varga* (dietary categories), marking the special parts, particularly from *Shloka* number 50 onward.

Salutation to Lord Ganesha: The manuscript starts with the salutation of Lord *Ganesha*, a traditional practice in classical Indian manuscripts, particularly in medical, scientific, and artistic texts. The salutation is marked in red ink, adding further significance to the act.

Shloka Structure: Each *Shloka* (verse) is concluded with a double *Dandam* (vertical stroke), a common characteristic in Sanskrit texts that indicates a verse's end.

Substitutions: Substituted words or corrections are marked in the margins and written in Sanskrit. These could indicate later editorial revisions or additions. Using the *Kakapad Chinha* (a bird-like symbol) to substitute words is a unique feature in some manuscripts.

Manuscript Characteristics

Language and Script:

Language: The manuscript is written in Sanskrit, a classical language used for Ayurvedic texts and scholarly works.

Script: *Devanagari* script is used, which was the standard script for Sanskrit texts

Correlation of the content mentioned in the manuscript with the Sutrasthana of Ashtanga Sangraha

To correlate all the verses of Ms with the *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha*, the scale was prepared in the form of grades

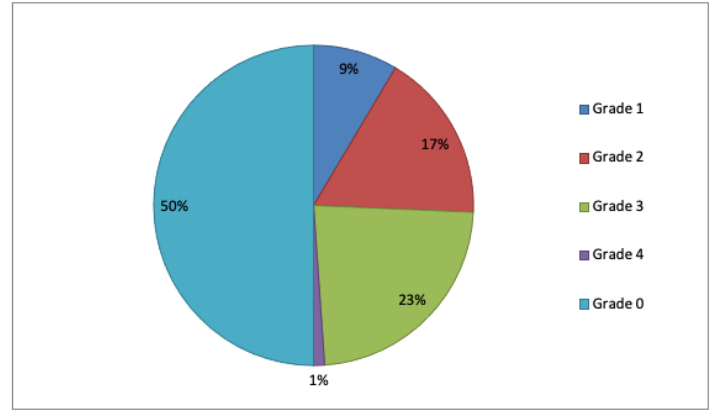
Table 1: For Example

	Manuscript	Ashtanga	Grade
षडरस	स्वादुम्लौषटुतिक्त कटुकषायोचेसमीषटरसद्रव्यस्थामह	रसाः स्वादून्मलवण तिक्तोषण	3
	पृथक्गततत्राद्यापवनंत्रयो	मारुतंघ्नन्ति	3
	अभ्यवहुताःश्लेष्माणमत्याःत्रयस्ते	तिक्ताद्यःकफम(19	2

Table 2: Correlation of Manuscript Dravyagunaaguna with Sutrasthana of Ashtanga Sangraha

Grades	0	1	2	3	4
Score	181	31	62	84	4
Percent	50.01	8.56	17.12	23.23	1.1

Graph 1: Shows comparative analysis between two texts



Discussion

The comparative analysis of Manuscript *Dravyagunaaguna* and the *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha* brings convergence and divergence to the fore in Ayurvedic dietetic classification. Almost half of the verses used in *Dravyagunaaguna* are new, emphasizing the author's novelty.

These variations could be due to local practices and cultural changes over time. The standard sections indicate continuity of classical thought, while the unique descriptions the seasonal nature of fish and differences in milk preparations indicate localized innovations. Hence, the manuscript is both an add-on and a complementary work to classical Ayurvedic dietetics.

Although the manuscript does not explicitly reference any specific *Granthas* (classical texts), its content compiles information on *Ahara Dravya Varga* (categories of food substances) drawn from various sources. It covers topics such as *Jalavarga* (water group), *Dugdha-Dadhi-Navaneeta Varga* (milk, curd, and butter group), *Patrashaka-Adiphala Varga* (leafy vegetables and fruits group), and *Iکشukhandha Varga* (sugarcane group), elaborating their properties, benefits, and drawbacks in detail.

By contrast, *Ashtanga Sangraha* presents a broader collection of substances, but more dispersed across different chapters of the *Sutrasthana*. For example: *Shadrassa* (six tastes) is described in the *Ayushkamiya Adhyaya*, *Abhyanga Varga* (oil massage group) appears in the *Dinacharya Adhyaya*, *Suvarnadi Varga* and *Shunthyadi Varga* are described in the *Vividhaushadhi Vijnaniyam Adhyaya*.

The comparative study suggests that while specific topics in the manuscript resemble content from the *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga*

Sangraha, the overlap is limited: Only 1.10% of the manuscript content is identical to the *Sutrasthana*, suggesting differences in the period or regional influences. 23.20% of the content shows slight modifications, with minor variations in individual words or letters. 17.12% uses different words but conveys the same meaning. 8.56% contains different words with opposing meanings. Nearly 50.01% of the manuscript's content is unique and not found in the *Sutrasthana*. Unlike that, the *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha* contains comparable information but is more scattered across different chapters.

This research is a step in furthering the knowledge of Ayurvedic concepts through a comparative Study of two significant early manuscripts. *Kavi Trimalla* and *Acharya Vagbhata's* contributions remained relevant even in the present world, and by looking back at their contributions, we can still further develop and improve Ayurvedic practices to suit modern society.

1] Furthermore, the *Guna* and *Aguna* of *Ashuddha Suvarnadi Dhātu* (impure gold and other metals) are absent in *Ashtanga Sangraha*, placing this content under grade 0

2] In manuscript - फाणितं ग्राह्यलघु च मधुरं

In *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha* – गुर्वभिष्यन्दि (20)

Grahi and "*Abhishyandi*" have nearly opposite physiological effects in Ayurveda. One promotes absorption, the other causes obstruction. This fits the Grade 01 category.

3] In Manuscript - दिव्यं भौममिति द्विधां बु गदितं दिव्यं चतुर्धा नुतत धारीयं करकोद्भवंच हीमजं तौ सारमित्याख्यया

In - *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha* -

कौपसारसताडागचौण्डप्रस्रवणौद्गीदम्बापीनदीतोयमवत तत् पुनः स्मृतमष्टधा (21)

The words and phrasing in both texts are not identical, but the core concept remains the same. The manuscript uses a different terminology from the *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha*, but both refer to types of water sources or their classification. Since the meaning aligns but the words differ, this falls under Grade 02 (Different words but same meaning and principles).

4] In Manuscript - पृथक्गत तत्राद्यापवन्नत्रयो

In *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha* - मारुतं घ्नन्ति त्रयः (19)

The phrase in *Ashtanga Sangraha* is a shortened or slightly modified version of the manuscript text, but the core meaning remains unchanged. This fits under Grade 03

5] In Manuscript – स्वादुम्लौषटुतिक्तकौकटुकषायौचेत्यमीषट्वसद्रव्यस्था

In - *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha* -

रसाः स्वादू म्लानलवणतिक्तोषणकषायकाः (21)

This phrase has slightly modified words but retains the same meaning, so it fits under Grade 03.

6] In Manuscript - धारोष्णत्वमृतं

In *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha* – धारोष्णमृतोपम (22)

Both phrases have similar words and the same meaning

Discussion about the Contribution of the Author

The entire manuscript *Dravyagunaaguna* is correlated with the *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha*. However, the content or verses that do not align with *Sutrasthana* at any level on the comparison scale can be considered the author's original contribution. The manuscript provides a broad and detailed description of *Shadrasa* (six tastes) and 15 other *Ahara Dravya Varga* (categories of food substances), which can be compared to the *Dravya* mentioned in *Ashtanga Sangraha*. Although most of the *Ahara Varga* in the manuscript is also described in the *Sutrasthana*, the content is not identical, highlighting the genuine contribution of the author.

Examples of the Author's Unique Contribution

Detailed Properties of *Goksheer* (cow's milk): The manuscript offers an elaborate description of the properties of cow's milk based on the cow's color and the time of consumption, which is absent in *Ashtanga Sangraha*. For instance:

Milk from a *Shweta Varna* (white-colored) cow is *Kaphakara* (*Kapha*-increasing).

Milk from a *Rakta Varna* (red-colored) cow is *Vatashamaka* (*Vata*-pacifying).

Milk from a *Kapila Varna* (brown-colored) cow is *Pittavata Rakta Shamak* (*Pitta-Vata* and blood-pacifying).

The time of milk consumption also influences its properties:

Purvanha (forenoon): *Vanhimardavakara* (softens *Agni*).

Aparanha (afternoon): *Vatanashaka* (*Vata*-pacifying).

Madhyanha (midday): *Kaphapittanashaka* (*Kapha-Pitta*-pacifying).

Seasonal Properties of *Matsya* (fish): The manuscript describes the merits and demerits of fish according to the season, which is not found in *Ashtanga Sangraha*. For example:

In *Vasant* (spring), *Greeshma* (summer), and *Varsha* (rainy season), fish from *Nadi* (rivers) and *Tadaga* (ponds) are considered beneficial.

This level of seasonal classification is absent in the *Sutrasthana*.

Categorization of Specific Vargas (groups):

The manuscript uniquely categorizes *Tambuladi Varga* (betel group), *Abhyanga Varga* (oil massage group), and *Shunthyadi Varga* (dry ginger group). However, in the *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha*, the description of the substances from these groups appears in a scattered form across different chapters, without explicit categorization.

Future scope of the study

Critical Edition and Validation: A critical edition of Manuscript *Dravyagunaaguna* by comparing multiple copies can help to ensure authenticity.

Cross Referencing with Other Classical Texts: Comparative analysis with classical texts such as *Charaka Samhita* and *Sushruta Samhita* will give a better understanding of Ayurvedic principles.

Clinical Trials and Empirical Research: Performing clinical trials on the basis of the described properties in *Dravyagunaaguna* can prove their efficacy in confirming traditional assertions.

Digitization and Preservation: Digitizing and preserving rare manuscripts will help future research and avoid the knowledge outlined in the manuscripts

Conclusion

The present comparative study shows that *Dravyagunaaguna* possesses originality and scholarly significance. Although certain concepts correspond with the *Sutrasthana* of *Ashtanga Sangraha*. The manuscript offers a more systematic classification of Ahara Dravya along with several distinctive observations not clearly available in the compared text. These features make it a valuable source for understanding the evolution of Ayurvedic dietetics.

The study highlights the importance of critical examination, preservation, and publication of unpublished Ayurvedic manuscripts for future academic and clinical research.

Declarations

Conflict of Interest: None.

Source of Funding: Self-funded; no funding from outside sources.

Ethical Clearance: Not required, as the study is manuscript and literary analysis based

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