

A REVIEW ARTICLE ON GUNA W.S.R. TO GURVADI GUNA

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ABSTRACT

There is nothing in the world which does not have therapeutic utility in appropriate conditions. *Ayurveda* described several *Siddhantas* (principles) for healthy and long life; the concept of *Guna* is one such principle of *Ayurveda* that helps us to understand the properties of various *Dravyas*. Among the *shat padarthas* told in *Ayurveda*, *Guna* finds a lot of practical applications in the diagnosis and treatment of diseases. The *gunas* reside in the *dravyas*. If a *Dravya* does not have *gunas* it will not be able to carry out any *karma* (action). *Gunas* are divided into certain subtypes, out of which *Gurvadi Guna* is one. These *Gurvadi gunas* are considered important amongst many types since these *Gunas* utilizes in various *Chikitsa*. *Gunas* are most practically useful as they denote the property of the *Dravyas* directly. The biological role of *Panchamahabhutas*, *Tridoshas*, *Ahara* and drugs, etc. can be described with the help of *Gurvadi gunas*. *Ayurveda Samhitas* have detailed the *panchabhautic* composition of *gurvadi*

gunas. Yet the concept is not elaborate and clear enough to be applied to understand a disease and treat it. Aim of this article is to bring into knowledge about “*Gurvadi guna*”.

KEYWORDS: *Gurvadi Guna*, *Ayurveda*, *Siddhantas*, *Dravya*, *Guna*, *Karma*, *Guru-Laghu*, *Shita-Ushna*, *Snigdha-Ruksha*.

INTRODUCTION

The word “*Guna*” is derived from the *dhatu* “*guna amantrane*”^[1] which means the basic property which attracts towards itself. Usually, people are attracted to a person or material

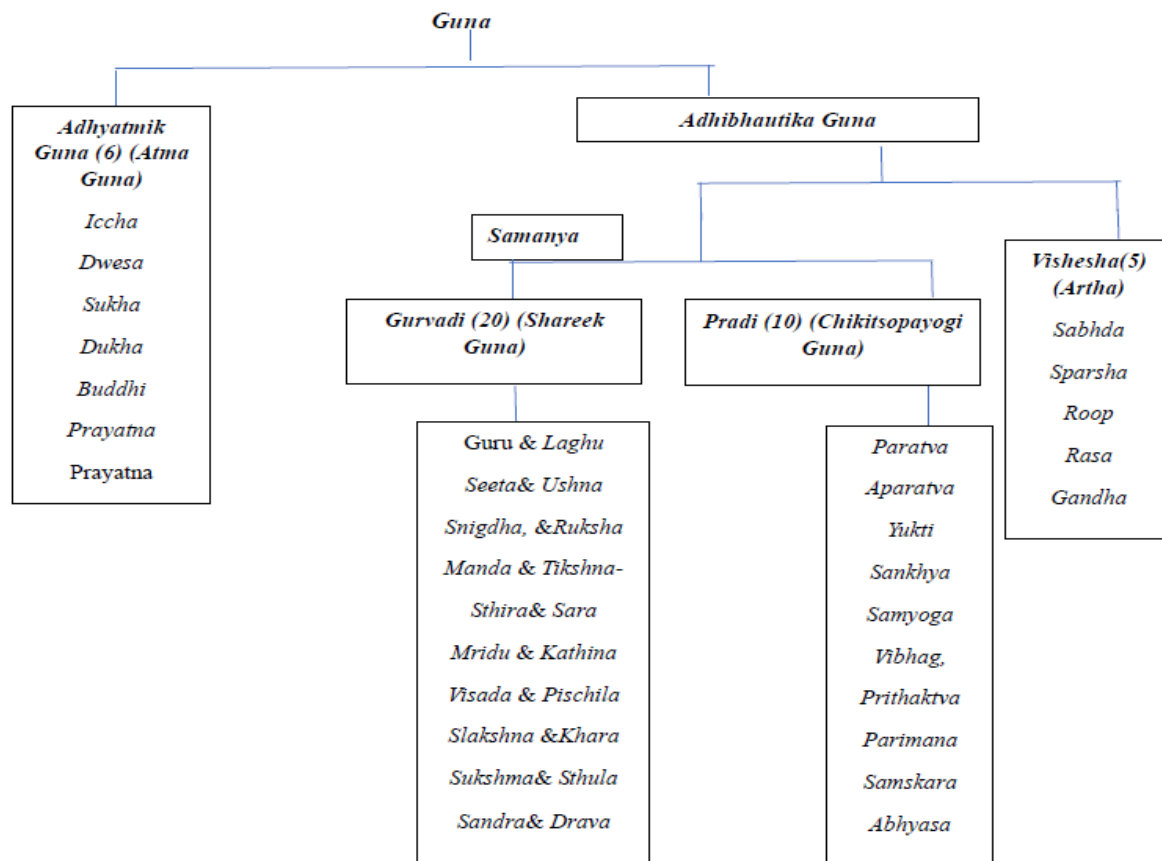
due to its qualities or properties. *Guna* is used to denote qualities and properties. In *Charaka-Samhita*,^[2] it is said that *guna* remains *samavayi* (inherent property) with *dravya*, it is *nischesta* (motionless), *akarana* (reasonless). In other words, *guna* has an inherent relation with *Dravya* and has a non-inherent relation with *karma*. The author of the text *Rasavaisheshik* describes *gunas* as “*vishvlakshna guna*” as these are responsible for the presence of various characteristics of *padartha* (substance).^[3] Generally, 41 *gunas*^[4] are classified as *Adhyatmika* and *Adibhautika*. Under *Adhyatmika* *guna*, 6 *gunas* are present i.e. *ichcha*, *dvesha*, *sukha* *duhkha*, *prayatna* and *buddhi*. *Adibhautik Guna* is further classified into *Samanya* and *Visesha* *guna*. *Samanya* *guna* are further classified into *Gurvadi* *gunas* and *Pradi* *gunas*. *Visheshik* *gunas* are five in number. The entire classification of *Guna* is represented in a flow chart as given below. In *Charak-Samhita*,^[5] also total forty one *gunas* are enumerated. *Chakradatta*, a commentator of *Charak-Samhita*, has subdivided these into three groups. 1) *Vaisheshik* *gunas* 2.) *Samanya* *gunas* 3.) *Atma* *gunas*. *Vaisheshik* *gunas* are five in number such as *shabda* (sound), *sparsha* (touch), *rupa* (vision), *rasa* (taste) and *gandha* (smell). They are specific objects (*artha* or *vishaya*) of five sensory organs *Sahabda*, *Sparsha*, *Roopam*, *Rasa*, *Gandha*. These five *Gunas* are subject of *Pratyaksha Pariksha*. They are helpful in identification of disease as well as drug. *Atma* *gunas* or *Adhyatmika* *guna* are six in number such as *ichcha* (desire), *dvesha* (aversion), *sukha* (pleasure), *duhkha* (pain), *prayatna* (will) and *buddhi* (determinative intellect). These *Guna* are related to *Manas*, and depict certain conditions in body. *Samanya* *gunas* are thirty in number among which 20 are *Gurvadi Guna* and 10 are *Pradi Guna*. *Paradi Guna* are called as “*Chikitsasiddha upaya*”. Applicatory or *paradi* *gunas* are ten such as *Paratva*, *Aparatva*, *Yukti*, *Sankhya*, *Samyoga*, *Vibhaga*, *Prithaktva*, *Parimana*, *Samskara*, *Abhyasa*. *Paratva* is wholesomeness while *aparatva* is unwholesomeness. *Yukti* is rational and effective combination of multiple factors. *Sankhya* is accurate marking. *Samyoga* is non-eternal combination of two or more factors. *Vibhaga* is *viyoga* (disjunction), *vibhakti* (excision) and *bhagasho graham* (division). *Prithaktva* is separateness or difference in terms of place, time, class and individuals. *Parimana* is estimation in terms of measurement or weight. *Samskara* is processing for refinement. *Abhyasa* is constant use or practice. These *gunas* are required for the preparation and use of medicines. *Gurvadi Gunas* are twenty in number and are most useful in the causing, diagnosing and treating disease. *Gurvadi Gunas* can be arranged in pairs one opposite to the other. *Gurvadi Gunas* (*Shareerika gunas*) have wide applicability in treatment as the same *gunas* predominate in the body too. These wide ranges of *gunas* have evolved in man in his natural form (*prakruti*) and the same *gunas* can be assessed in a

diseased condition (*vikruti*) and this forms an interesting area for study. All the *Dravyas* are made up of *panchmahabhutas*, in other words one can say that the *Mahabhutas* are smallest unit of *Dravyas*. The *Gurvadi gunas* are the combination of these *mahabhutas*. For any kind of treatment *Ausadha* is required, this *ausadha*(drug) works on the basis of five fundamentals called as *Rasapanchaka*. They are *Rasa*, *Guna*, *Virya*, *Vipak* & *Prabhava*. The *gurvadi guna* are present in the *dhatus* of the body. The *Dravya* having *Guru Guna* should increase the *Dhatu* having same *guna*. The *Dravya* having Opposite *guna* should decrease the *dhatu*. On this Phenomenon, when there is *Mansakshaya* & *mansa* is given & when there is *Raktakshaya*, *Rakta* is given. *Gunas* are present in subtle form in *Dravyas*, their presence is known by performed actions. Acharya Hemadri^[6] was the first one to depict the relation between *Guna* and *Karma*. These can be summarized as: **Guru** – *brimhane guru*, **Laghu** – *langhane laghu*, **Manda** - *Shamne Manda*, **Tikshna**- *Sodhane Tikshna*, **Seeta** – *stambhane hima*, **Ushna**- *swedane ushna*, **Snigdha** – *kledane snigdha*, **Ruksha** - *shoshane ruksha*, **Sthira**- *Dharane shakti Sthira*, **Sara**- *Prerana Sara*, **Mridu** -*Shalthane Mridu*, **Kathina** - *Dridhikarane Kathina*, **Visada** -*Kshalane Visada*, **Pischila**- *Lepane Pischila*, **Slakshna**- *Ropane Slakshna*, **Khara**- *Lekhane Khara*, **Sukshma** -*Vivarane Sukshma*, **Sthula** *Samvarane Sthula*, **Sandra**- *Prasadane Sandra*, **Drava** - *Vilodane Drava*. So, it can be said that the treatment is also based upon the *gurvadi gunas*.

Classification of Guna^[7]

Table 1: Tabular presentation of Guna.^[8]

Acharya Charaka	41	Sartha Guna (5) Paradi Guna (10) Gurvadi Guna (20) Prayatna Guna (6)
Acharya Sushruta	20	
Acharya Vagbhatta	20	
Acharya Chakrapani		Vaisheshika Guna (Adhibhoutika Guna), Samanya Guna (Adhibhoutika Guna and Aatma Guna (Adhyatmika Guna)
Yogendranath Sena	42	41 Gunas + Mana
Vedanta Nagarjuna		Has mentioned Sheetosnadi Dasa Karmanya Gunas
Sidhanta Chandrodaya		Has mentioned Aalasya as Guna
Kanaada	17	
Nyaya Darshana	24	
Vedanta Darshana	Innumerable	



MATERIALS AND METHODS

All the classical texts of *Ayurveda* (*Samhitas* along with their commentaries) were referred for the conceptual study.

Description of *Gurvadi Gunas*

Table 2: Relation between *Guna* and *Karma*.

<i>Guna</i>	<i>Karma</i>	<i>Guna</i>	<i>Karma</i>
Guru [Heaviness]	Brimhana	Laghu [Lightness]	Langhna
Manda [Dullness]	Samana	Tikshna [Sharpness]	Sodhana
Sita [Coldness]	Stambhana	Usna [Heatness]	Swedana
Snigdha [Soothingness]	Kledana	Ruksha [Dryness]	Sosana
Sthira [Immobility]	Dharana	Sara [Mobility]	Prerana
Mridu [Softness]	Shalthana	Kathina [Hardness]	Dridhikarana
Visada [clearness]	Kshalana	Pischila [Sliminess]	Lepana
Slakshma [Smoothness]	Ropana	Khara [Roughness]	Lekhana
Sukshma [Minuteness]	Vivarana	Sthula [Bulkiness]	Samvarana
Sandra [Solidity]	Prasadana	Drava [Fluidity]	Vilodana

Table 2: showing relation between *Guna* and *karma*.

1. *Guru guna*

This means heavy by weight. The actual meaning of 'guru' is that it is heavy to digest. Obviously, for digesting *guru dravyas*, the *agni* has to use considerable energy and thus the *agni* becomes weaker. This *guna* is responsible for the natural downward movement. This *guna* creates heaviness in the body and reduces the digestive capacity. Substances possessing high molecular weight like proteins may have *guru guna*.

e.g. *Masha* - *Swabhava guru*, *Matra guru*.

Mugda - *Swabhava laghu*, *Matra laghu*.

Guru guna acts as *vata hara* and *kapha vardhaka* (reduces *vata* and aggravates *kapha*); it nourishes all the *dhatus* (*Brimhana*) it increases *malas* (increases quantity of excreta) and coats the *srotas* (*Srotopalepa*); undergoes *Guru paka* (*Madhura vipaka*). *Virechana*, *Balya*, *Brimhana*, *Vrishya* etc., are pharmacological actions exerted by *Guru guna*. However, it may cause digestion disturbances owing to its quality of heaviness.

On the Psyche (*Manas*) it may impose inhibitory effects on receptive capacity. e.g. *Glani*, *Avassda* etc.

Guru guna is the main feature of *Prithvi* and *Jala bhutas*. It is responsible for *Madhura rasa*, *Madhura vipaka* and *Seeta virya*.

This *guna* is antagonist *guna* of *laghu*. Generally, the *dravyas* of *madhur varga* are *guru*. The *dravyas* which bring about *bruhan* of the body are *guru*. The components of *guru dravyas* are compactly arranged. The constituents of the body also become more compact on account of *guru dravyas*. Due to this compactness, *pachak pitta* cannot easily breakdown these *dravyas*. Therefore these are heavy to digest.

(2) *Laghu guna*: (Lightness)

Laghu means light. Lighter by weight means *laghu*. Also, the *guna*, which, through its presence, brings about lightness of the body is called *laghu*. This definition is relative to the action of *agni*. The word "*laghu*" is also used in context with "heavy".

The quality which results in very light weight or which reduces weight is known as *laghu*. Substances possessing lower molecular weight may have *Laghu guna* e.g. *Mudga*, *Laja* etc.

It acts as *kapha hara* and *vata vardhaka* (reduces *kapha* and aggravates *vata*); it reduces the tissue weights (*Langhana*); it reduces *malas* (decrease quantity of excreta) and clears the channels of the body, it under goes *laghu paka*.

Vamana, *Lekhana*, *Pachana* etc., are the pharmacological actions exerted by *Laghu guna*. It improves the digestion being easily digestible. On the psyche (*manas*) it has positive effects by improving activeness and providing inspiration.

Laghu guna is the main feature in *Akasha*, *Vayu* and *Agni bhutas*. It is responsible for *Katu-Kashaya Rasas*, *Katu Vipaka* and *Ushna Virya*.

Laghu dravyas relieve *kapha* and increase *vata*. This *guna* causes depletion of the dhatus of the body. It is also *lekhana* and facilitates healing of wounds (*lekhan* - reducing viscosity - *Dalhan*). *Laghu dravyas* clear the channels of the body of their wastes and bring lightness in the body. *Laghu dravyas* are easy to digest, increase the *agni* and relieve false sense of contentment (anti-saturative). Yet, over use of *laghu guna* is not desirable. *Laghu dravyas* induce a feeling of enthusiasm and alertness. *Laghu dravyas* should be used in diseases generated by *guru* diet like *aam*, *prameha*, *udar jvara*, *grahani* etc. The property of lightness (*laghu*) can be created in food items by suitable conditioning; but rice flakes, moong and flesh of leva bird etc. are naturally *laghu*. This is so because the components of these *dravyas* are not compactly arranged.

(3) *Seeta guna*: (Cold)

The quality which reduces the body temperature is known as *Seeta guna*. It helps to check the flow of water and fluids. e.g. *Chandana*, *Usira* etc. It subsides, *pitta* and aggravates *vata-kapha*; improves tissues; acts as diuretic and controls sweating and purgation. This quality is helpful in the mangement of *Murcha*, *Trishna*, *Daha* etc. It increases the quantity of urine but induces constipation and acts as an anti-perspirant and as a mood-elevator.

It produces pleasant feeling to mind. *Jala bhuta* and *vayu bhuta* are *seeta* in nature.

Among the *Rasas Madhura- tikta-kashaya* are *Seeta* in na ture. *Madhura vipaka* is also cold in nature.

Naturally, it alleviates burning sensation (consequence of *ushna* [hot]). Generally, it increases all the *dhatus* of the body and acts as haemostatic. *Prithvi* and *vayu* may appear cold but this

property does not belong to them. This *guna* does not help in *shodhana* but is useful for *shamana* (pacification of doshas). The *dravyas* that induce *stambhan* action have *sheeta guna*.

Sheeta guna aids congestion. The constituents of the body also contract and thus the action of *stambhan* is produced. It propagates immobility. When, due to trauma, there is external or internal bleeding, *sheeta guna* is useful for haemostasis. Application of ice or cold water is found to be very useful for arresting external or internal bleeding due to trauma.

(4) Ushna guna: (Hotness)

The quality by which body temperature is increased or the property which results in sweating is known as *Ushna guna*. Hot touch is known as *ushna*. It is the antagonist of *sheeta*.

Ushna guna acts as *Vata-Kapha hara* and *pitta vardhaka* (reduces vata kapha and increases pitta); it results in haemorrhage and has adverse effects on *dhatus*; it reduces the quantity of urine and increases that of Sweat & Stools. It produces pharmacological action like *Pachana*, *Deepana*, *Swedana*, *Langhana* etc. It is useful in conditions like: *Agnimandya*, *Pratisyaya*, *Kapha vikaras* etc.

Ushna guna is the main feature of *Agni bhuta*. It is responsible for *katu rasa*, *katu vipaka* and *Ushna virya* e.g. *Chitraka*, *Chavya*.

Ushna guna has an innate tendency to increase burning sensation. It increases the heat of the *dhatus* of the body. *Ushna guna* reduces the fluidity of *dhatus* and causes their depletion. It is an adjunct to *shodhana* and bloodletting but is not advisable in *raktapitta*. Since *ushna guna* is inductive to *shodhana*, it facilitates excretion of faeces, urine and sweat. It produces fainting, giddiness, excessive thirst and burning sensation. Though it may feel hot to touch yet it is not the *guna* of these *mahabhootas*.

Chitrakadi dravyas, *maricha*, *pippali*, *sunthi*, chillies are all *ushna* in property and action. The sun's rays, fire are examples of *dravyas* which are hot to touch.

(5) Snigdha guna: (Unctuousness)

The quality which provides oily appearance or unctuousness is known as *Snigdha*. It will provide smoothness, moisture and oily nature to the body. It subsides *vata* and aggravates *kapha*; provides tonicity to tissues; regularize the movement of malas; acts as *Vajikarana*.

Balya, Vrishya, Snehana, Varnya etc., are the pharmacological actions of *Snigdha guna*. *Snigdha guna* is the specific feature of *Jala bhuta* e.g. *Ghrita, Sigru* etc. It is found in *Madhura-Amla-Lavana rasas*; and *Madhura vipaka*. It is useful in *vata vyadhis*, *vata* predominant skin problems like *Kitibha, Mandala* etc.

Due to this *guna* various parts of the body like skin become moist and unctuous. *Snigdha guna* strengthens all the dhatus. *Sneha* has an innate similarity with the constituents of the body and propagates the compactness between the components of various dhatus.

(6) Ruksha guna: (Dryness or non-unctuousness)

The property which is responsible for dryness or which results in absorption of moisture is known as *Ruksha*. This *guna* is the antagonist of *snigdha*. Presence of this *guna* brings about dryness. This *guna* has the capacity to absorb. That *guna* which brings about ununctuousness, hardness and dryness is called *ruksha*. *Vayu mahabhoota* possesses *ruksha guna*. *Ruksha guna* aggravates *vata dosha*. *Ruksha guna* has been mentioned first among all the other *gunas* of *vata*.

It will have negative effect on most of the *dhatus*; reduces the quantity of excreta. *Ruksha guna* results in *Sthambhana. Soshana, Rukshana, Avrishya* actions. *Ruksha guna* is mainly related with *vayu bhuta*. But there are references about *Agni* and *Prithvi* also possessing *rukshatwa*. It is found in *Katu-Tikta-Kashaya rasas* and *Katu Vipaka*. It is useful in *Sotha, Prameha, Swasa Medo roga, aama dosha, Urusthambha* etc.

(7) Manda guna: (Dullness or Mildness)

The property which is responsible for the slow activity or delayed response of a substance is known as *Manda guna*. It is otherwise defined as the quality which will subside the vitiated doshas or which is helpful in the palliative treatment of diseases. This activity makes the drug to travel through the body for a long time.

It aggravates *kapha* and subsides *vata*; it strengthens the tissues; does not help in the expulsion of excreta.

Vata-pitta samaka, Mala bandhaka, Chira paka etc; are its actions. It is mainly related to *prithvi* and *Jala bhutas*. e.g. *Guduchi, Amalaki, Ati visha* etc. *Madhura-Tikta-Kashya Rasas; Seeta virya* and *Madhura vipaka* are results of *Manda guna*.

This *guna* has the least amount of mobility hence its action is also slow and mild. This *guna* is useless for *shodhana* but is good for *shamana*. It increases *kapha*, which has similar tendency. *Teekshna guna*, which is the prime attribute of *pitta dosha* and an antagonist of *manda guna*, is pacified by *manda guna*. It increases all the *dhatu*s of the body and since it slows down digestion, it acts as a nutritive.

All the *manda dravyas* like *shatavari*, *doorva*, *anantamool* are examples of *shamana dravyas*. These *dravyas* have proper ties antagonist to *teekshna guna*.

(8) Tikshna guna: (Sharpness or Fast-acting)

It is the quality which is responsible for the quick activity of a drug or sharpness of a drug. It is otherwise known as the property which will expel the doshas completely i.e., it is helpful in curative treatment of diseases. In our day to day practice we use the word *teekshna* (sharp) for the edges of weapons and for describing the properties of old liquor, *maricha* etc. In *dravyagunakarma* also, *teekshna guna* has been mentioned in the *gunas* of *mohari*, *maricha*, *chitraka* etc. The *dravyas* having *teekshna guna* have many actions and these are equally rapid as well. This property usually stimulates through irritation etc. Where as *Manda guna* depresses the activities.

Tikshna guna acts as *pitta vardhaka* and *Kapha-vata hara*; it reduces tissue weights; enhances the excretion of *malas*.

It is useful in *Vamana* (emesis) and *Virechana* (purgation). It also produces *Dāha*, *Pāka* and *Srāva*.

Tikshna guna is mainly related to *Agni bhuta*. This property is used in *Apasmara*, *Mada*, *Sanyasa*, *Swasa* etc., conditions e.g. *Bhallataka*, *Maricha*, *Danti* etc.

Generally, *teekshna guna*, induces *shodhana*. *Dravyas* like *danti* (drum), *tridhari nirdung*, *jayphal*, *mohri* are *teekshna*, *shodhana dravyas*. As this *guna* is similar to the *gunas* of *pitta*, it is natural that *teekshna pitta* will be increased by this *guna*.

(9) Sthira guna: (Immobility)

The quality which brings about immobility or firmness is known as *sthira guna*. It mainly restricts the falling of *Kesa* (hair). *Smasru* (mustach), *Roma* (bodily hair), *Asthi* (bone),

Nakha (nails), Danta (teeth), Sira (veins), Snayu (ligaments) Dhamani (arteries) & Sukra (Semen). That means it provides strength to many of the tissues and skin appendages etc.

It acts as kapha vardhaka and subsides vata; strengthens all the dhatus; controls faeces and flatus etc.

It is the quality mostly related with Prithvi bhuta. It is useful in conditions like: Khalitya, Asthi Sosha, Danta chalana, Sira saithilya, Dhamani saithilya, Sukra meha etc. e.g.: Bala, Sukti, Atibala etc.

It is responsible for Madhura-Tikta rasas; Seeta Veerya and Madhura vipaka.

All the dhatus are essentially sthira. If "shodhana" has been done properly, one of the parameters of knowing that shodhana has been done properly is "dhatu sthiratva". Yet, sthira guna should be seen in context with sara. The dhatus have an innate tendency towards vrudhi (increase) or kshaya (decrease). This continuous drift towards a state of either increase or decrease is not possible without saratva. Yet, dhatusara is predominantly believed to be of sthira guna. Their sthiratva is not absolute (Individuals in whom the dhatus are comparatively sthira do not undergo considerable change in their body weight which may remain unchanged for years. This is a sign of dhatu-sthiratva as also of good health. "Buddhi" (intellect) should also be sthira.

(10) Sara guna: (Mobility)

The quality by which a substance spreads all over the body very easily or very quickly is known as Sara guna. It is otherwise defined as the property which stimulates different movements e.g. Haritaki, Trivrit. It usually aggravates vata and through that other malas or doshas are stimulated. It reduces the tissue weights and enhances the movement of excreta (malas). Though Sushruta considered it as a quality of Jala bhuta, it appears to be predominantly vata property.

Some people consider 'Chala' guna in place of Sara guna. This quality is useful in the vitiation of Kapha, Medo roga, etc.

(11) *Mridu guna*: (Softness or Fragility)

The property which brings about softness or fragility to the body is known as *Mridu*. *Mamsa* (muscle), *Rakta* (blood), *Medas* (fatty tissue), *Majja* (bone marrow), *Hridaya* (heart), *Nabhi* (umbilicus), *Yakrit* (liver etc., organs are considered as soft in nature by Sushruta.

It aggravates *kapha* and subsides *vata-pitta*; it brings about fragility to the tissues; liquifies the excreta.

It is useful in reducing *Daha* (burning), *Paka* (inflammation) and *Srava* (secretions)

Mridu guna is mainly related to *Akasa bhuta*. e.g. *Godhuma*, *Eranda taila*, *Yashti madhu* etc.

(12) *Katina guna*: (Hardness)

The quality which gives rise to the feeling of hardness and rigidity is known as *Katina*. It aggravates *vata* but provides hardness or strength to *dhatus* also. It however dries up the excreta.

Prithvi bhuta mainly bears this quality. Examples of *Katina guna dravyas* are: *Aswagandha*, *Shatavari*, *Pravala* etc. *Katina guna* is used in *Sandhimukta*, *Kanda bhagna* etc.

(13) *Visada guna*: (Clearness)

It provides transparent nature or clearness to the subjects. That means this quality provides clean and clear state of the tissues.

The property which washes away the dirt is also called as *Visada*. It makes the *dhatus* free from impurities etc. e.g.: *Rakta* (blood), *Medas* (fatty tissue), *Majja* (bone marrow), *Hridaya* (heart), *Nabhi* (umbilicus), *Yakrit* (liver etc., organs are considered as soft in nature by Sushruta.

(14) *Pichchila guna*: (Stickyness or Sliminess)

The quality which is responsible for stickiness of a substance is known as *Pichchila*. It will have a coating effect (*lepana*) over the tissues. It aggravates *kapha* and subsides *vata*; it improves the *dhatus* and causes stickiness to the excreta. e.g.: *Asthi Samharaka*, *Bhallataka* etc. It also results in actions like: *Jeevaniya*, *Balya*, *Sandhanakara* etc. Mainly useful in *Asthi bhagna* and *Sandhi mukta*.

Pichchila guna is mainly related to the *Jala bhuta*.

(15) *Slakshna guna*: (Smoothness)

The quality which provides smoothness is known as *slakshna*. It helps in soothing (*ropana*) process. e.g. *Haridra*, *Abhraka* etc. It acts as *Kapha-Pitta vardhaka* and *vata hara*; provides *dhatu vriddhi*; causes expulsion of *malas*.

Charaka quoted it as *Akasa guna* while *Nagarjuna* considered as *Agni guna*. *Sushruta* described it as equivalent to *Pichila guna*.

(16) *Khara guna*: (Roughness)

The quality responsible for roughness of a substance is known as *Khara*. e.g.: *Vacha*, *Silajatu*, *Karkoti* etc.

It will have *lakhana* property; acts as *vata-var dhaka*; reduces the *dhatu* levels; also reduces the quantity of *malas*. This is otherwise mentioned as '*Karkasa*' by *Sushruta*. Its functions are claimed to be same as *Visada*.

Khara or *Karkasa* is the quality mainly seen with *Vayu* and *Agni*.

(17) *Sookshma guna*: (Fineness or Microscopic nature)

The quality through which a drug can penetrate through the minutest channels of the body is known as *Sukshma*. Therefore it is defined as the fineness of a Substance.

It aggravates *vata* and subsides *kapha*; it reduces tissue weights: also reduce the quantity of excreta and under goes *Laghu paka*. Vasodilatation may be the result of this property. *Agni*, *Vayu*, *Akasa* are all possessing *Sukshma guna*. e.g. alcohol (*Madya*), *Lavana* (salt) etc.

Sookshma guna causes depletion of the *dhatu*s. It absorbs the water content of the *malas*. *Dravyas* having *sookshma guna* are easy to digest. The action of this *guna* is to clear the blocked channels (*srotas*). This *guna* is generated from *agni*, *vayu* and *akash mahabhootas*. Obviously, this *guna* is an antagonist of *prithvi* and *jala mahabhoota*. All poisons are *sookshma*. Alcoholic beverages, with properties similar to those of poisons, are also *sookshma*. *Dravyas* like *maricha* are also *sookshmagami*. Coupled with *teekshna guna*, it becomes even more *sookshmagami*.

(18) Sthula guna: (Bulkiness)

It is the quality which brings about bulkiness and delay in desintegration of a drug. Eg. *Dadhi*, *Pinyaka* etc.

It results in *Guru paka* and causes *Sorotorodha* (obstruction to channels of the body). It acts as *Kapha vardhaka* and *vata-pitta Samaka*.

It increases the tissue weights and also increases the quantity of *Malas* there by helping in their expulsion.

It is main feature of *Prithvi bhuta*. It is used in *Vata Vyadhis*.

(19) Sandra guna: (Solidity or Turbidity)

The quality which provides solidity or turbidity to any substance is known as *Sandra guna*. In other words it is described as the property by which different parts of the body are strengthened or nourished (*Prasadana*).

It aggravates *kapha* and subsides *vata*; increases the tissue functions & structure; solidifies the excreta.

Sandra is the characteristic feature of *Prithvi bhuta*. e.g. butter, milk-cream etc. This property is responsible for *Brimhana*, *Bandhana*, *Prasadana* etc, effects.

Bhava Mishra mentioned *Sushka* in place of *Sandra* (as opposite to *Drava*). It is because of *Prithvi*, *vayu*, *Agni bhutas*.

(20) Drava guna: (Fluidity)

The property which is responsible for fluidity is known as *Drava*. It is the main feature of *Jala bhuta*. We find the utility of *Drava guna* is *Snehana*, *Swedana* & *Sthambhana*. It aggravates *Kapha-pitta* and subsides *vata*; improves liquid *dhatu*s like *Rasa*, *Rakta* etc.; also increases the quantity of excreta. e.g. *Jala* (water), *Ksheera* (milk) etc.

It is two types

- (i) *Sansiddhika* (natural) e.g. water
- (ii) *PanchNaimittika* (artificial) e.g. ghee, oil etc.

This *guna* has the ability to moisten the constituents of the body and diffuse into these.

These *dravyas* increase *kapha*, *pitta* and fluid *dhatus* of the body like *rasa* etc. The action of this *guna* is to increase the fluid malas like *mutra*, *sweda* etc. and facilitate their excretion.

A normal human being generally drinks approximately 2.5 pints of water per day. The kidneys filter around 37 gallons of fluid per day. *Jala mahabhoota* is the only sustainer of this *guna*. Water, milk are examples of *dravyas* with this *guna*.

The human body, which appears solid to us, is actually made up of 60 to 70% of fluid. In our body, the circulation of *dhatus* is because of *drava guna*. Many litres of fluid is circulated through various organs of our body like heart, kidneys, liver, intestines etc per day. Pumping and supply of *rasa dhatu* from the heart to the various organs of the body is possible due to the *drava guna* of *rasadhatu*. Bones contain 20% fluid whereas plasma contains 95% fluid. Few *dravyas* have an innate property of *drava* (eg. water). But in some other *dravyas* it can be artificially created- ghee and metals like gold.

Table 3: Gurvadi Guna and their properties and actions.^[9]

Sr.No	Guna	Panchbhautik composition	Doshkarma	Mukhya karma	Examples
1.	Guru	Prithvi+Jala	Kaphahara, Vatakara	Brihmana	Masha, Musali etc.
2.	Laghu	Vayu+ Akash+Agni	Vatakara, Kaphghana	Langhana	Mudga, Laja etc.
3.	Sheet	Jala	Vaatsleshmakaar, Pittaghana	Stambhana	Chandana etc.
4.	Ushna	Agni	Vaatsleshmhara, Pittakara	Svedana	Chitraka etc.
5.	Snigdha	Jala	Vatahara, kaphakara	Kledana	Ghrit etc.
6.	Ruksha	Prithvi+Vayu+Agni	Kaphahara, Vatakara	Soshana	Yava etc.
7.	Manda	Prithvi+Jala	Pittahara, kaphakara	Shamana	Amritadi etc.
8.	Tikshna	Agni	Kaphahara, Pittakara	Sodhana	Jayaphala etc.
9.	Sthira	Prithvi	kaphakara	Dharana	Jatiphala
10.	Sara	Jala	Kaphahara	Prerana	Aragvadha
11.	Mridu	Akash+Jala	kaphakara	Slathana	Eranda taila
12.	Kathina	Prithvi	Vatakara	Dridhikarana	Pravala, Mukta
13.	Vishada	Prithvi+Vayu+Teja+Akash	Vatakara	Kshalana	kshara
14.	Picchila	Jala	kaphakara	Lepana	ashvagolam
15.	Slakshna Khara	Agni	Pittakara	Ropana	dugdhapashana
16.	Khara	Vayu	Vatakara	Lekhana	karanjphala

17.	<i>Sukshma</i>	<i>Agni + Vayu + Akash</i>	<i>Vatakara</i>	<i>Vivarana</i>	<i>Madya</i>
18.	<i>Sthula</i>	<i>Prithvi</i>	<i>kaphakara</i>	<i>Samvarana</i>	<i>Pishtak, Dadhi</i>
19.	<i>Sandra</i>	<i>Jala</i>	<i>kaphakara</i>	<i>Prasadana</i>	<i>Navneetaka</i>
20.	<i>Drava</i>	<i>Jala</i>	<i>kaphakara</i>	<i>Vilodana</i>	<i>Jala, Dugdha</i>

Table no. 4: Showing Relations Between Rasa and Gurvadi Guna.

Rasa	Guna
<i>Madhura</i>	<i>Guru, sita, snigdha</i>
<i>Amla</i>	<i>Laghu, snigdha, usna</i>
<i>Lavana</i>	<i>Guru, snigdha, usna</i>
<i>Katu</i>	<i>Laghu, ruksha, ushna</i>
<i>Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu, ruksha, sita</i>
<i>Kasaya</i>	<i>Guru, ruksha, sita</i>

The twenty *guna* are in pairs. These pairs are opposite to each other in their therapeutic actions. To treat these two states, two groups of *guna* have been described. Two main divisions of treatment is *Santarpana* and *Apatarpana*. These groups of *guna* applied in treatment of diseases accordingly. The *santarpana guna* are: *guru, manda, Sita, snigdha, slakṣṇa, sandra, katiṇa, sthira, sthula*, and *picchila* where as *apatarpana guna* are *laghu, tiksna, usṇa, ruksa, khara, drava, mrdu, sara, sukṣma* and *visada*.

Out of these twenty *guna*, according to *Susruta*, 8 *guna* are the most important. They are also termed as *virya*. They are also known as *astavida viryavada* by *Vagbhata*. They are: *guru-laghu, snigdha-rukṣa, mrdu-tikṣṇa*, and *sita-usna*. Again these eight *guna* form two groups, i.e. *Santarpana* and *apatarpana*. The four *guna* of each group have almost similar action. The difference seems to be in relation to presence of *rasa*, because these *guna* reside in *dravya* which are identified and understood in terms of *rasa*.

Susruta has mentioned some additional *guna* apart from the above 20 *gurvadi guna*.^[10]

1. Vyavayi- The *dravya* which spreads all over the body before getting digested and exhibits its *guna* is *vyavayi*. This is made up of *vayu* and *akasha mahabhuta*. Eg: *Bhanga* and *Ahiphena*.

2. Vikasi- The substances which spreads all over the body. That which causes *ojokṣina*-depletion of *ojus* and enters into *dhatu*, then relaxes the *sandhi* joints of the body is said to be the *vikasi guna*. This is formed mainly of *vayu mahabhuta*. Eg: *Puga, kodrava* etc. These *vyavayi* and *vikasi* qualities mentioned as *guna* are again mentioned in *karma* which seems to be ideal.

3. Sugandha-That which gives a feeling of pleasure or a feeling of satisfaction and which is sukṣma, rocana and mrdu is stated as sugandha."

4. Durgandha- The opposite qualities of sugandha is stated as durgandha. They cause displeasure, and aruci.

5. Asukari- That which spreads all over the body and acts quickly is stated as asukari. This action is very fast similar to a drop of oil when dropped on water, which spreads immediately. This quality again mentioned as karma."

6. Suska -Bhavamisra has mentioned this guna as the opposite quality of drava, fluidity. This quality is composed by pṛthvi, vayu and tejas mahabhuta. This quality may be considered under the qualities of sandra or rukṣa.

Application or uses of Gurvadi Guna

The gurvadi guna are present in the dhatus of the body. These guna are also present in the auṣdha and ahara. The dravya having guru guna should increase the dhatu having the same guna. The dravya having opposite guna should decrease the dhatu. On this phenomenon, when there is mamsa ksaya, the mamsa is given and when there is raktaksaya, the rakta is given. If there is any exceptional cases or condition then depending upon the circumstances the proper dravya is to be given.

Importance of guna^[11]

Acharya Nagarjuna has mentioned ten factors supporting the importance of Guna.

1. Rasabhibhava: (overcoming the taste)

The guna acts by over coming the properties of rasa. For eg. water is Madhura in nature and usually aggravates kapha. But hot water reduces kapha due to Ushna guna. Here, the ushna guna of hot water overcomes the natural property of water- Madhura rasa and acts as kaphaghana. Similarly, Patola and Brihat panchmool are bitter in taste but subsides vata. In this case also, Ushna guna is the reason but not the Rasa. Hence guna is important.

2. Rasaanugraha: (guna based rasa selection)

The importance of guna is that it over comes the action of rasa and therefore it is considered as pradhana. The ghrita is said to be the best among madhura rasa dravyas because of its sita, snigdha mrdu and picchila guna. Amalaki is said to be the best among amla rasa dravya, because of its mrdu, sita guna and laghuvipaka. Among lavana, the saindava lavana is considered the best because of its mrdu and snigdha guna. Pippali is considered to be the best among katu rasa dravya because of its mrdu and guru guna. Among tikta rasa dravya,

patolaphala is considered the best because of its vṛṣya, guru and picchila guna. Madhu because of its many qualities and having the action of vṛṣya and brihana it is considered to be the best among kaṣaya dravya. The guna of a dravya favours the rasa to exhibit the best effect. Therefore, guna is said to be pradhana.

3. Vipaka karanatwa: (Vipak depends on guna)

The vipaka of a dravya depends upon its guna. sita, snigdha, guru and picchila dravya have guru vipaka, where as the dravya which are having rukṣa, tikṣṇa and visada guna will have laghu vipaka. The end product of a dravya is vipaka. This vipaka depends on the guna of the dravya. Therefore the guna of a dravya is predominating factor when concluding the vipaka of a dravya. On the basis of vipaka the action of the dravya is exhibited on doṣa, dhatu and mala in an individual. Therefore the guna is dominant factor.

4. Sankhya bahulya: (Gunas are mre in number)

The number of guna is more than number of rasa. The rasa is six in number whereas the gurvadi guna are 20 in number. Therefore, guna being more in number, it is considered as Pradhan.

5. Prayoga bahulya: (multiple utilities)

Gunas are used more frequently and through different channels than Rasas. Infact Rasa can be used through only one channel, that is Rasanendriya (tongue). Whereas, properties like Seeta, Ushna, Snigdha, Ruksha etc., are generally used for Abhyanga (oliation), Parisheka (bathing), Avagaha (tub-bath) etc. Therefore gunas are more Prominant than Rasas.

6. Karma bahulya: (Multiple effects)

Guna results in many effects (Karma) since it is common for Rasa, Virya, Vipaka etc. All the effects of other drug constituents are rejected by gunas. Hence guna is superior.

7. Vishaya bahulya (Guna is more related to mind faculties)

Many qualities of gunas are more concerned with the faculties of mind compared to those of sensory organs. Hence guna is important.

8. Upadesa: (Emphasis by the elders)

All the treatises and Acharyas of Ayurveda have emphasized about the superiority of gunas. Hence is important among the drug constitnents.

9. *Apadesa*: (Introduction by means gunas)

Any living or non-living creation is introduced by means of their Properties. eg a man can be introduced as he is furious (तीक्ष्णोऽयं पुरुषः) or a calm going (मृदुरयं पुरुषः). Therefore guna is superior.

10. *Anumana*

Through cause i.e., *guna* the effect can be inferred. Through *Seeta*, *Ushna* etc. *gunas*, the effects like *Pittaghna*, *Vataghna* etc are assumed respectively. Hence *guna* is important.

DISCUSSION

Guna and *Dravyas* are in an inseparable relationship i.e. *Guna* is present in *Dravyas* since its origination till its end. After analysing the four categories of *Guna*, it seems only *Gurvadi Guna* is relevant in the definition. Rest three does not accomplish the parameter. *Sartha Guna* can be said to be the quality aspect of *Guna* which is helpful in diagnosis of patient and identification of drugs. In other words the subject of *Pratyaksha Pramana* represents the quality aspect of *Guna*. *Gurvadi Guna* can be said as property [chemical] of substance by virtue of which it acts. These *Gunas* are present in their self form, in form of *Rasa*, in form of *Vipaka* and *Virya*. These properties are deduced by *Pratyaksha* and *Anumana Pramana*.

All six *karans* are responsible for *Chikitsa*, but *Guna Pradhan Chikitsa* is widely used in practice. The *Guna* is present in unmanifested form in *Dravya*, which when combines with body, manifests itself into *karma*. In other words it could be said that, *Guna* is potential energy, while *karma* is kinetic energy. *Acharya hemadri* has stated particular *karma* for a particular *Guna*. These *Gunas* are present in pairs opposite to each other. The vitiation of either of these twenty *Gunas*, present in either *Dosas* are only responsible for occurrence of disease, at the same time the drugs are also possessing these *Gunas*, thereby helping in treatment. Identification of symptoms identifies the vitiated *Dosas*, and opposite quality drugs are being selected.

CONCLUSION

It is very important to understand the concept of *gunas* so that we can apply the same to understand a disease and treat it. It appears to have practical applicability in treatment. The disease process and its manifestation can be properly understood by applying this concept of the evolution of a wide range of *gunas* from five *mahabhutas*. This understanding also helps

us to choose the most appropriate drugs for the treatment of a particular disease considering all the factors involved in the treatment. The possible application of this concept in diagnosis and treatment thus proves to be applicable in the clinical practice of Ayurveda. The assessment of *gunas*, thus, forms a valuable tool in diagnosing and treating a disease for an Ayurveda practitioner. The development of a questionnaire for proper assessment of *gunas* would be necessary. Once the assessment is appropriately done, treatment would become more specific and ensure success.

The understanding of predominance of *Gunas* involves in *Doshas* vitiation help to understand pathogenesis of diseases and treatment can be planned accordingly to suppress disease causing *Guna*. The drugs possessing opposite *Gunas* to that of *Guna* of disease causing elements offers therapeutic benefits in pathological ailments. The concept of *Nidana parivarjana* also involves avoidance of particular *Guna* which may causes disease. The nourishment and disease resistant value of *Ahara* also depends upon their *Guna*. The concept of *Pathya apathya* can be advises by considering *Guna* predominance of substances. The physiological and pathological conditions of body can be demarcated by the *Gurvadi gunas*. *Vridhhi* and *Kshaya* of *Dosha gunas* lead diseases, the *Aushadhi dravyas* having some *Gunas* and these *Gunas* used by the physician to restore *Doshas* into their *Sama avastha*. The *Guna* of a *Dravya* confides *Rasa*, *Virya* and *Vipak* which offers many biological responses inside the body. The *Bhesaja* of any disease can be selected on the basis of *Gurvadi gunas* of medicines and aggravated *Gunas* of disease causative factors.

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