



CRITICAL ANALYSIS ON PANCHAVIDHA KAPHA KARMA CONSIDERING SUBJECTIVE AND OBJECTIVE PARAMETERS

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ABSTRACT

Background: Kapha Dosha is one of the three fundamental regulatory principles (Tridosha) in Ayurveda, primarily responsible for structural integrity, stability, cohesion, lubrication, nourishment, immunity, and anabolic metabolism. Dominated by Prithvi (earth) and Jala (water) Mahabhutas, Kapha imparts qualities such as heaviness (Guru), coldness (Sheeta), steadiness (Sthira), smoothness (Snigdha), softness (Mridu), and density (Sandra). These attributes maintain tissue growth (Dhatu Poshana), strength (Bala), endurance, and psychological calmness. Classical texts including Charaka Samhita, Ashtanga Hridaya, and Ashtanga Sangraha describe Kapha as functionally subdivided into five types - Kledaka, Avalambaka, Bodhaka, Tarpaka, and Shleshaka - collectively termed Panchavidha Kapha. Each subtype is localized in a specific anatomical region and performs specialized physiological roles essential for maintaining homeostasis. **Aim and Objectives:** To critically analyse the functions of the five subtypes of Kapha Dosha (Panchavidha Kapha) by integrating subjective patient-reported symptoms with objective clinical findings to improve diagnostic accuracy and therapeutic outcomes in Ayurveda. **Materials and Methods:** References were collected from classical Ayurvedic texts (Ashtanga Hridaya, Charaka Samhita, Ashtanga Sangraha), commentaries, and modern physiology literature to correlate classical descriptions with contemporary clinical parameters. **Discussion and Conclusion:** Assessment of Panchavidha Kapha requires evaluation of both subjective symptoms and objective investigations. Each subtype of Kapha shows distinct structural and functional attributes. Kledaka Kapha relates to digestive lubrication and gastric mucosal protection; Avalambaka Kapha to cardiopulmonary support; Bodhaka Kapha to taste perception and salivary function; Tarpaka Kapha to neurological nourishment and mental stability; Shleshaka Kapha to joint lubrication and musculoskeletal stability. A comprehensive understanding emerges only when classical Ayurvedic concepts are correlated with measurable clinical parameters.

KEYWORDS: Kapha, Dosha, Kledaka, Avalambaka, Bodhaka, Tarpaka, Shleshaka, Anabolism, Stability, Lubrication.

INTRODUCTION

Human body is composed of *Dosha, Dhatu* and *Mala*. Among which *Doshas* are the principle factors for regulation of homeostasis in the body. *Doshas* form the foundational pillars of *Ayurvedic* physiology, serving as the essential bio energetic forces that govern all biological processes within the human body. Although these *Doshas* are not directly perceivable through the senses, their existence and influence are inferred through the various physiological functions they control, such as digestion, circulation, respiration, neural activity, and tissue metabolism. When *Doshas* functioning normally, it maintain health and balance within the body. Any imbalance in the *Doshas* leads to functional disturbances, which manifest as disease². Hence, the understanding and management of *Doshas* are vital to the *Ayurvedic* approach to health and healing. *Ayurveda* explains that the human body is sustained by *Tridosha - Vata, Pitta, and Kapha*, along with *Dhatu* and *Mala*. Among these, *Kapha Dosha* represents the principle of structure, stability, cohesion, and nourishment. It is predominantly composed of *Jala* and *Prithvi Mahabhuta*, and hence possesses qualities such as *Guru* (heaviness), *Snigdha* (unctuousness), *Sheeta* (coldness), *Manda* (slowness), *Sthira* (stability), and *Mridu* (softness).

Kapha is responsible for maintaining anabolic activities, tissue growth, lubrication of organs, strength, immunity (*Vyadhikshamaiva*), endurance, patience, and emotional calmness. It forms the physical basis of the body and provides resistance against degeneration. When *Kapha* remains in a state of equilibrium, it promotes strength, compactness of tissues, enthusiasm, and mental stability. However, when aggravated, it produces symptoms such as heaviness, lethargy, excessive sleep, mucus accumulation, obesity, and metabolic sluggishness.

Classical *Ayurvedic* texts describe *Kapha* as being functionally divided into five subtypes (*Panchavidha Kapha*): *Kledaka Kapha, Avalambaka Kapha, Bodhaka Kapha, Tarpaka Kapha, Shleshaka Kapha*³. Each subtype has a specific location and distinct



physiological functions. Though *Kapha* cannot be directly visualized, its presence is inferred through the functions it performs. Modern clinical practice demands objective parameters for assessment; therefore, correlating classical descriptions with measurable physiological and biochemical parameters enhances diagnostic precision. A critical evaluation integrating both subjective (patient-reported) symptoms and objective clinical findings is essential to understand the comprehensive role of *Panchavidha Kapha* in maintaining homeostasis⁴.

The functional interpretation of *Panchavidha Kapha* becomes particularly significant in the present era, where lifestyle disorders, metabolic syndromes, respiratory ailments, and degenerative joint conditions are increasingly prevalent⁵. Many of these conditions exhibit clinical features that closely resemble *Kapha* imbalance, such as heaviness, excessive secretions, sluggish metabolism, and tissue overgrowth. Therefore, a systematic understanding of *Kapha* subtypes not only strengthens theoretical knowledge but also enhances clinical applicability⁶. In addition, the integrative evaluation of classical *Ayurvedic* principles with contemporary biomedical insights offers a more comprehensive understanding of physiological regulation. By correlating traditional descriptions with anatomical structures, biochemical processes, and measurable diagnostic indicators, the role of *Panchavidha Kapha* can be interpreted in a scientifically relevant manner without compromising its classical essence. Such an approach supports evidence-based *Ayurvedic* practice and encourages interdisciplinary research⁷. Thus, exploring *Panchavidha Kapha* from both classical and modern perspectives provides a deeper insight into its contribution to structural integrity, nourishment, immunity, and overall homeostasis. This integrative framework lays the foundation for improved diagnostic precision, targeted therapeutic strategies, and a holistic understanding of health and disease within the *Ayurvedic* paradigm⁸.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

To critically analyse the functions of the five subtypes of *Kapha Dosha* (*Panchavidha Kapha*) by integrating subjective patient-reported symptoms with objective clinical findings, in order to enhance the precision of diagnosis and effectiveness of therapeutic interventions in *Ayurveda*.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

For this article, various references are collected from classical *Ayurveda* texts, commentaries and research journals physiology text books later valid & reliable hypothesis was built.

DISCUSSION

Kapha Dosha primarily governs structural integrity, lubrication, nourishment, and stability. Its five subtypes operate in distinct anatomical locations, yet function collectively to maintain equilibrium. The concept of *Panchavidha Kapha* described in *Charaka Samhita*, *Sushruta Samhita*, and *Ashtanga Hridaya* explains the functional diversification of *Kapha* into five subtypes-*Kledaka*, *Avalambaka*, *Bodhaka*, *Tarpaka*, and *Shleshaka*. Each subtype performs specific physiological and structural roles in maintaining *Sharira sthirata* (stability), *Sneha* (unctuousness), *Bandhana* (cohesion), and *Poshana* (nourishment). A critical analysis integrating subjective (clinical symptoms) and objective (measurable biomedical parameters) helps in understanding its contemporary relevance. Conceptual Framework of *Panchavidha Kapha*. *Kapha*, being composed of *Prithvi* and *Jala Mhabhuta*, represents anabolic, structural, and stabilizing functions. The fivefold division is primarily based on *Sthana* (location), *Karma* (function), and *Vikriti* (pathological manifestation). From a critical perspective, this division reflects an early functional specialization similar to modern organ-system physiology. However, classical descriptions are qualitative. Therefore, bridging subjective observations with objective parameters enhances interpretative clarity.

Subjective Parameters in *Panchavidha Kapha* Assessment: Subjective parameters include clinical features observed through *Darshana*, *Sparshana*, and *Prashna Pariksha*. *Kledaka Kapha*: Heaviness in abdomen, excessive salivation, nausea, indigestion. Reflects impaired *Agnideepana* and improper gastric lubrication. Clinically correlates with symptoms of dyspepsia or gastritis. *Avalambaka Kapha*: Chest heaviness, breathlessness, lethargy. Psychological dullness and dependency traits may also manifest. Suggests cardiopulmonary and postural support dysfunction. *Bodhaka Kapha*: Altered taste perception, excessive salivation, anorexia. Impaired gustatory sensation affects appetite regulation. *Tarpaka Kapha*: Mental dullness, excessive sleep, poor memory. Emotional attachment and reduced cognitive sharpness. Closely linked to psychological *Kapha* traits (calmness vs inertia). *Shleshaka Kapha*: Subjective signs: Joint stiffness, swelling, restricted movements. Early osteoarthritic symptoms resemble *Kapha vridhhi*. Subjective assessment depends heavily on physician experience and patient expression. Lack of standardized scales may reduce reproducibility.

Objective Parameters in *Panchavidha Kapha* Assessment: To enhance scientific validation, objective measurable correlates may be considered. *Kledaka Kapha*: Gastric mucosal secretion levels, pH analysis of gastric juice, Endoscopic findings. *Avalambaka Kapha*: Pulmonary function tests (PFT), Echocardiography, Oxygen saturation. *Bodhaka Kapha*: Salivary secretion rate, Taste threshold



tests, Salivary enzyme analysis *Tarpaka Kapha*: CSF composition analysis, EEG patterns, Neurotransmitter levels, Cognitive assessment scales. *Shleshaka Kapha*: Synovial fluid examination, MRI of joints, Inflammatory markers (CRP, ESR) Critical Observation: Although exact one-to-one equivalence is not always possible, functional similarities between *Kapha* subtypes and modern physiological systems support interdisciplinary research. Integrative Interpretation: From a systems biology perspective: *Kledaka* → Gastrointestinal mucosal protection. *Avalambaka* → Cardiorespiratory support & thoracic stability, *Bodhaka* → Gustatory-salivary complex. *Tarpaka* → Neuroendocrine & CNS nourishment, *Shleshaka* → Articular lubrication system. The *Ayurvedic* model provides a functional and holistic framework, while modern medicine offers quantitative validation tools. Strengths of *Panchavidha Kapha* Concept: Functional localization long before anatomical precision. Emphasis on preventive physiology. Holistic integration of physical and psychological aspects. Clinical utility in early detection of *Kapha* disorders.

CONCLUSION

Kapha Dosha is the fundamental principle responsible for stability, nourishment, lubrication, and immunity. Its five subtypes perform specialized yet interrelated functions essential for maintaining homeostasis.

Understanding *Panchavidha Kapha* solely through translation is insufficient; integration of subjective clinical features with objective diagnostic parameters provides a more comprehensive perspective.

Systematic assessment of *Panchavidha Kapha* enhances early diagnosis, accurate interpretation of symptoms, and effective therapeutic planning in *Kapha*-related disorders. Bridging classical Ayurvedic wisdom with modern biomedical concepts strengthens both theoretical clarity and clinical applicability.

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