

A Critical Review of Pulses - Shimbidhanya in Internal Therapeutics

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Abstract

The classical Ayurvedic Samhita findings from scientific writing and scholarly interpretations by ayurveda experts collectively demonstrate the significant potential of Shimbi Dhanya in both diet and therapeutic applications. The review explores their classification, Rasapanchak (pharmacodynamic properties) which contributes their role in maintaining health and managing wide spectrum of disorders. References from Charak Samhita, Sushrut Samhita and Nighantus of Ayurveda were collected systematically with respect to Shimbi Dhanya. Evidence based research studies were also reviewed in this regard and are compiled in this article.

Keywords Shimbi Dhanya, Rasapanchaka, Pharmacodynamics, Formulations (Yog) , Internal therapeutic use.

Introduction

In Ayurveda Aahara, Nidra and Brahmacharya are described as Trayopastambha (1) by Acharya Charaka which plays a very important role in maintenance of healthy life. Among these three Aahara has been given prime importance for healthy life of individual. Known as Mahabheshaja (great medicine) by Acharya Kashyapa, proper diet sustains strength, enhances complexion, boosts Ojas (vital essence), sharpens intellect, and promotes longevity while maintaining dosha-dhatu balance. It supports Agni (digestive fire), prevents diseases through Pathya guidelines, and supports treatment as the foundation of healing. Charaka says that wholesome Ahara gives Bala (vigor), Varna (radiance), and growth, while improper intake breeds illness. Thus, balanced nutrition proves more vital than medicines alone for health preservation and cure.

Ayurveda employs systematic classification of dietary substances to optimize therapeutic outcomes through nutrition. Also, the concept of Ahara Vidhi Visheshayatana (2) (disciplined ayurvedic guidelines) emphasizes the critical role of prakriti or Dravya swabhava (the inherent physicochemical properties of substances) in determining their therapeutic suitability. Understanding the intrinsic nature of a Dravya (food or medicinal substance) enables precise selection based on an individual's digestive capacity (Agni) and metabolic response. These Pharmacodynamics, including qualities such as Guna (attributes), Rasa (taste), Virya (potency), and Vipaka (post-digestive effect), govern the pharmacodynamic and pharmacokinetic interactions of the substance within the biological system. Consequently, this framework facilitates personalized and optimized therapeutic interventions, allowing practitioners to align specific substances with disease pathophysiology and patient constitution for improved clinical outcomes.

Shimbi Dhanya Varga, comprising pulses like Mudga and Kulattha, exemplifies this approach within Dhanya Varga as outlined in classical compendia. Charaka Samhita (3) designates Shimbi Dhanya as dicotyledonous grains with predominantly Laghu-Ruksha guna, serving dual nutritional and medicinal roles. Sushruta Samhita (4) similarly categorizes these pulses under Vaidala dhanya, emphasizing their surgical utility alongside systemic effects.

These pulses exhibit diverse pharmacodynamics, balancing Kapha-Pitta while moderating Vata, with applications spanning Jwara, Prameha, and Vrana management. Modern analyses confirm their rich protein, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory profiles, supporting classical claims for metabolic and wound healing benefits. Although these pulses appear in various disease chapters, no single study clearly compares their health benefits between Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita. Charaka mainly describes their use as regular healthy food, while Sushruta explains their role in surgery and wound treatment. This gap shows the need for a proper textual review, especially as modern science increasingly confirms the medicinal value of pulses. Therefore, the present study aims to undertake a systematic literary review of Shimbi as described in the Dhanya Varga, with

special reference to its pharmacodynamics attributes and internal therapeutic uses in the Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita. (5),(6)

Materials and Methodology

Study Design

The present study is a classical literary review based on systematic analysis of primary Ayurvedic texts. (5), (6) The research involves identification, compilation, and critical examination of references pertaining to Shimbi Dhanya Varga, with special emphasis on its pharmacodynamic attributes and therapeutic applications used internally.

Data Sources

Primary data was obtained from authoritative editions of the Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita.(5), (6) Commentaries and standard translations were studied to ensure accurate interpretation of Sanskrit terminology. Secondary references from classical Dravyaguṇa literature were used wherever necessary for clarification of conceptual parameters. (7)

Additionally, modern botanical and ethnopharmacological literature was consulted to correlate classical descriptions with contemporary scientific understanding. (8) e-niganthu was referred to get keen knowledge of guna. (7)

Inclusion Criteria

- Shimbi Dhanyavarga explained in the Charaka Samhita.
- Vaidala Dhanyavarga explained in the Sushruta Samhita.
- Descriptions involving Rasa, Guṇa, Virya, Vipaka, Karma and therapeutic indications.

Exclusion Criteria

- Mythological or non-therapeutic references
- Later-period Nighaṇṭu citations (unless required for terminological clarification)
- Unverified regional interpretations i.e. not explicitly mentioned in Ayurved Samhitas and not validated by modern science.

Method of Data collection-

All references of Shimbi were identified through manual textual screening and indexed search of available digital Sanskrit databases. Collected data were categorized under:

- Nomenclature
- Taxonomical placement
- Pharmacodynamics (Rasa, Guna, Veerya, Vipaka, Doshaghnata)
- Therapeutic indications
- Formulations

The collected data were comparatively analysed between Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita to identify similarities, differences, and contextual interpretations.

Observations

Table 1. Nomenclature of Shimbi Dhanya Varga —

Sr. No.	Shimbhidhanya	Latin Names	Family	English name
1.	Mudga	Phaseolus aureus Robs	Fabaceae	Green gram
2.	Masha	Phaseolus mungo Linn	Fabaceae	Black gram
3.	Rajamasha	Vigna catiāng Walp	Fabaceae	Cow pea
4.	Nishpava	Dollchos lablab Linn.	Fabaceae	Flat bean
5.	Makusthaka	Phaseolus acontifolia	Leguminosae	Kidney bean
6.	Masura	Lens cullinaris Medic.	Fabaceae	Lentil
7.	Adhaki	Cajanus indicus Spreng	Fabaceae	Red gram
8.	Chanaka	Cicer arietinum Linn.	Fabaceae	Bangal gram
9.	Kalaya	Pisum sativum Linn.	Fabaceae	Round pea

10.	Triputa	Lathyrus sativus Linn.	Fabaceae	Grass pea
11.	Kulaththa	Dolichos biflorus Linn	Fabaceae	Horse gram
12.	Tila	Sesamum indicum Linn	Pedaliaceae	Sesame
13.	Atasi	Linum usitatissimum Linn.	Linaceae	Lin seed
14.	Tuvari	Eruca sativa mill	Cruciferae	Rocket salad

Table 2. Pharmacodynamics of Shimbi Dhanya Varga (5), (6), (9), (10)

Sr. No.	Shimbi dhanya	Rasa	Veerya	Vipaka	Guna	Doshagnata
1.	Mudga	Kashaya (Astringent), Madhura (Sweet)	Sheeta (Cold)	Katu	Ruksha (dry)	Kapha Pitta Nashak, Alpa Vatkarak
2.	Masha	Madhura	Ushna (Hot)	Madhura	Guru (heavy), Snigdha(unctuous)	Vata Nashak, Kapha Pitta Karak
3.	Rajamasha	Kashaya Madhura	Ushna	Madhura	Guru, Rukksha	Vatakarak
4.	Nishpava	Madhura Kashaya	Ushna	Amla	Ruksha ,Guru	Pittavardak, Kaphanashak, Vata vibandkarak
5.	Makusthaka	Madhura	Sheeta	Madhura	Laghu (light)	Vatkarak, Kapha Pitta Nashak
6.	Masura	Madhura	Sheeta	Madhura	Laghu , Ruksha	Vatkarak, Kapha Pitta Nashak
7.	Adhaki	Kashaya Madhura	Sheeta	Madhura	Ruksha, Laghu	Vatkarak, Kapha Pitta Nashak
8.	Chanaka	Kashaya	Sheeta	Katu	Ruksha, Laghu , Sheetata	Vatkarak, Kapha Pitta Nashak
9.	Kalaya	Madhura	Sheeta	Madhura	Ruksha, Sheetata	Kapha Pitta Nashak, Vata vardak
10.	Triputa	Madhura Tikta (Bitter), Kashaya	Sheeta	Katu	Ruksha, Sheetata	Vata kopak Kapha Pitta Nashak
11.	Kulattha	Kashaya	Ushna	Katu	Laghu, Ushna	Vata Kapha Nashak
12.	Tila	Katu (Pungent), Tikta (Bitter), Kashaya (Astringent), Madhura	Ushna	Katu	Guru, Snigdha, Ushna	Tridoshanashak
13.	Atasi	Madhura (Sweet), Tikta (Bitter)	Ushna	Katu	Snigdha, Guru	Tridoshanashak
14.	Tuvari	Katu, Tikta	Ushna	Katu	Laghu, Tikshna	Kaphashamaka

Table 3. Internal therapeutic uses and indications in focus of Shamana (palliation therapy) (5), (6)

Sr. No.	Shimbi dhanya	Formulations, Yoga	Rogagnata (Therapeutic applications)
1	Mudga	Mudga yusha	Vamanottara bhojana (C. Su. 15/16) Jvara (C. Chi. 3/163, 188) Raktapitta (C. Chi. 4/37) Prameha (C. Chi. 6/19-21) Kamala (C. Chi. 16/42,43) Hikka – shwasa (C. Chi. 17/ 97,98) Pittaja Kaas (C. Chi. 18/96)

			Atisara (C. Chi. 17/35-37) Pittatisara agnisandhukshanartha (C. Chi. 19/50) Yonivyapada- stanyadosha chikitsottara (C. Chi. 30/ 257,258) Virechana prayoga -virechana dravya bhavita mudga yusha (Su. Su. 44/14) Galashundi (Su. Chi. 22/56) Shopha (Su. Chi. 23/12)
2	Mudga	Pupalika	Vrushyapupalika yog (C. Chi. 2,3/15-17)
3	Mudga	Yavagu	Raktapitta (C. Chi. 4/46)
4	Mudga	Hima	Prabala Raktapitta (C. Chi. 4/78) Pittaja chardi (C. Chi. 20/31)
5	Mudga	Kwatha	Visarpa (C. Chi. 21/61)
6	Mudga	Lehya	Kaphaja Chardi (C. Chi. 20/37)
7	Mudga	Bhojanartha	Sarva vatarakta bhojanartha (Su. Chi 5/13) Kushta bhojanartha (Su. Chi 9/5) Prameha bhojanartha (Su. Chi 11/6) Vamanottara bhojanartha (C. Su. 15/16)
8	Mudga	Pathya	Sthaulyanashaka (Ch. Su. 21/25-27) Santarpana janya prameha -mudgamalaka (C. Chi. 6/47,48) Rajayakshma (C. Chi. 8/116) Shotha (C. Chi. 12/62,63) Arsha (C. Chi. 14/205) Visarpa (C. Chi. 21/108-114) Pittaja pratishyaya (C. Chi. 26/148) Kaphaja pratishyaya (C. Chi. 26/156)
9	Masha	Gutika	Vajikarana (C. Chi. 2(2)/ 3-9)
10	Masha	Kshirayog	Vajikarana -Vrushyakshira (C. Chi. 2(2)/ 18-19) Vajikarana - Kevala vrushya kshirayog(C. Chi. 2(3)/ 3-5)
11	Masha	Payas	Vajikarana (C. Chi. 2(3)/ 14)
12	Masha	Pupalika	Vajikarana (C. Chi. 2(3)/ 15-16) Vajikarana (C. Chi. 2(4)/ 19-22) Vajikarana (C. Chi. 2(4)/ 23,24) Vajikarana (Su. Chi 26/21)
13	Masha	Ghruta	Vajikarana -Apatyakara ghruta (C. Chi. 2(4)/28,29) Apasmara - Mahakalyanaka ghruta (C. Chi. 9/42)
14	Masha	Avaleha	Pittaja chardi (C. Chi. 20/28)
15	Masha	Utkarika	Vajikarana (Su. Chi 26/16,17)
16	Masha	Yavagu	Kaphajanya pratishyaya-vamanartha (Su. U. 24/30)
17	Masura	Yusha	Jwara (C. Chi. 3/188) Jwara (Su. U. 39/150) Raktapitta (C. Chi. 4/37) Raktarsha (C. Chi. 14/204,205) Koshtha-shuddhyuttara (C. Chi. 16/41,42) Pitta-atisara (C. Chi. 19/50) Vamanante (Su. U. 40/27) Atisara (SU U 40/60)
18	Masura	Yavagu	Raktapitta (C. Chi. 4/46) Sarv-atisara nashaka (C. Si. 8/38-40)
19	Masura	Avaleha	Kaphaja chardi (C. Chi. 20/37)
20	Masura	Paan	Visarpa (C. Chi. 21/60) Trushna (C. Chi. 22/31,32)
21	Masura	Pathya	Visarpa (C. Chi. 21/108-114) Yonivyapada- stanyadosha chikitsottara (C. Chi. 30/257,258) Sarva praninam aaharartha (Su. Su. 20/5)
22	Msura	Ghruta	Gumla - rohinyadi ghruta (C. Chi. 5/115)
23	Nishpava	Supya-yusha	Vishtambha (C. Su. 27/100)

24	Makushtaka	Yusha	Jwara (C. Chi. 3/188) (Su. U. 39/150) Raktapitta (C. Chi. 4/37) Arsha (C. Chi. 14/205) Pitta-atisara (C. Chi. 19/50)
25	Makushtaka	Pathya	Sarva praninam aaharartha (Su. Su. 20/5)
26	Rajamasha	Sneha	Unmada -mahakalynaka ghruta (C. Chi. 9/41,42 teeka)
27	Aadhaki	Yusha	Raktapitta (C. Chi. 4/37) Koshtha-shuddhyuttara (C. Chi. 16/41,42) Pitta- atisara (C. Chi. 19/50) Vamana paschat bhojana (Su. Chi 33/11) Shosha (Su. Su. 41/37)
28	Aadhaki	Pathya	Arsha (C. Chi. 14/205) Kaphaja pratishyaya (C. Chi. 26/156) Sarva praninam aaharartha (Su. Su. 20/5) Prameha (Su. Chi 11/6)
29	Aadhaki	Ghruta	Santarpana -Amrutaghruta(C. Chi. 23/243)
30	Aadhaki	Siddha jala (water)	Kaphaj trushna (Su. U. 48/21)
31	Chanaka	Yusha	Jwara (C. Chi. 3/188) (Su. U. 39/150) Raktapitta (C. Chi. 4/37) Trushna (C. Chi. 22/31,32) Vata shonita (C. Chi. 29/51)
32	Chanaka	Pathya	Rajyakshma (C. Chi. 8/116) Visarpa (C. Chi. 21/108-114) Prameha (Su. Chi 11/6)
33	Chanaka	Avaleha	Kaphaja chardi (C. Chi. 20/37)
34	Chanaka	Yusha - Odaka	Chardi (C. Chi. 20/31)
35	Kalaya	Avaleha	Kaphaja chardi (C. Chi. 20/37)
36	Kalaya	Pathya	Sarva praninam aaharartha (Su. Su. 20/5) Kshira doshaghna (C. Chi. 30/258)
37	Kulattha	Pathya	Sthoulya (C. Su. 2/2-27) Yakshma (C. Chi. 8/68) Shotha (C. Chi. 12/62,63) Kamala (C. Chi. 16/129) Kaphaja kaasa (C. Chi. 18/109) Yonivyapada- stanyadosha chikitsottara(C. Chi. 30/257,258) Prameha (Su. Chi. 11/6) Kaphodara (Su. Chi. 14/7)
38	Kulattha	Yusha	Jwara (C. Chi. 3/188) Arsha (C. Chi. 14/93,94) Hikka-shwasa (C. Chi. 17/94,95) Kaphaja kaasa, Hikka-shwasa (C. Chi. 18/129) Kaphaja madatyaya (C. Chi. 24/170) Kaphaja pratishyaya (C. Chi. 26/156) Vataja pradara (C. Chi. 30/8) Vataja ashmari (Su. Chi. 7/7) Prasava trutiya Avastha (C. Sha. 8/42) Vamana pashchata (Su. Chi. 33/11) Virechanartha-sukhapurvaka virechana (C. K. 8/14) Virechanartha (Su. K. 8/94)
39	Kulattha	Yavagu	Vrana chikitsa (Su. Chi.2/52-54)
40	Kulattha	Sneha	Pliha- vidradhi pidaka – dhanvantara ghruta (Su. Chi. 12/5) Prasuta stree- bala taila (Su. Chi. 15/30) Sadhya snehana – ghrutapaka (Su. Chi. 31/43)
41	Tila	Pupalika	Vajikaran -vrushya ppalika yoga (C. Chi. 2(3)/15-17)
42	Tila	Churna	Gulma (C. Chi. 5/91)

43	Tila	Sneha	Unmad -mahakalyanaka ghruta (C. Chi. 9/43) Prameha -abhyantara snehana (C. Chi. 6/16)
44	Tila	Yusha	Varchaksyaya -Dhanyayushaa (C. Chi. 19/35-37) Kaphajanya pratishyaya-Vamanartha (Su. Chi. 24/30)

(Table 3. Here C. Su. = Charaka Sutrasthana, C. Chi. = Charaka Chikitsasthana, C.K.= Charaka Kalpasthana, C.Si. = Charaka Siddhisthana, C. Sha. = Charak Sharisthana, Su. Su. = Sushrut Sutrasthana, Su. Chi. = Sushrut Chikitsasthana, Su. U. =Sushrut Uttarasthana)

Discussion

In the classical texts of Ayurveda, Shimbi Dhanya are described for various therapeutic applications. Among these, the preparation of Yusha is most frequently mentioned as an Internal therapeutic intervention in different disease conditions. For ex., Mudga Yusha is commonly prescribed in conditions such as Jvara and Agnimandya due to its laghu (light) and pachana (digestive) Pharmacodynamics, which help in improving digestion and restoring strength during illness. Likewise, further successively lesser use in Internal Therapies could be found sequentially for Yavagu, Pupalika, Sneha Kalpana, Churna, Gutika, Pathya, etc.

A representative example of critical analysis can be demonstrated through the therapeutic use of Mudga Yusha (green gram soup) in the management of Raktapitta. From the classical Ayurvedic perspective, Mudga is described as Kashaya-Madhura Rasa, Sheeta Virya and Ruksha Guna with Kapha Pitta Shamaka (pacification) properties. These attributes rationally support Mudga indication in Raktapitta, a condition characterised by vitiation of Pitta Dosha by Ushna Tikshna Guna causing sudation of Sapta Dhātu. The resultant liquid discharged from Dhatus gets mixed with Rakta causing volumetric rise in it, making it irritable i.e. Utklishta due to increased Sara, Drava Guna. The Shita Virya, Ruksha Guna, Kashaya Rasa dominant Pitta pacifying action contributes to pacify the aggravated Pitta. Shoshana of excessive Drava, also Kashaya Rasa exhibits Rakta-stambhana (haemostatic effect), thereby helping in controlling bleeding manifestations.

Critically analysing this indication in the context of modern biomedical view, Mudga (*Vigna radiata*) possesses documented antioxidant, anti-inflammatory properties, which may correlate with stabilization of vascular integrity and reduction of oxidative stress which are key factors involved in haemorrhagic conditions. Its light digestibility (Laghu Guṇa) ensures minimal metabolic burden, which is particularly beneficial in patients with compromised digestive capacity (Agni), often observed in Raktapitta.

However, a critical limitation lies in the lack of robust clinical trials directly validating its efficacy as a standalone intervention in acute bleeding disorders. Additionally, its Laghu Ruksha Guṇa may potentially aggravate Vata if used excessively or without appropriate adjuvants, highlighting the need for individualized therapeutic use. Pharmacodynamic properties find robust scientific validation: Mudga's Kapha-pitta nashaka action correlates with alpha-amylase inhibition by polyphenols; Kulattha's Ushna Virya supports diuretic effects against Ashmari; Chanaka's Grahi karma matches fiber-mediated antidiarrheal activity. These correlations bridge classical Dravyaguna with evidence-based phytochemistry, positioning pulses as economical therapeutics for prevalent conditions like Prameha and Vrana. Study limitations encompass interpretive discrepancies across Samhita editions and absent quantitative Matra (dosage), alongside sparse Vipaka documentation for certain Dravyas (Rajamasha, Kalaya). Future research should prioritize clinical validation of Mudga yusha in fever management, and comparative dosha-modulation trials to establish evidence-based protocols.

Thus, while classical indications are logically consistent with both Ayurvedic principles and emerging pharmacological insights, integration with evidence-based research and clinical standardization is essential to substantiate its therapeutic claims and ensure safe application.

Conclusion

Shimbi Dhanya Varga (leguminous grains) is an important group in Ayurvedic dietetics and therapeutics. Classical texts describe around 13 types of pulses with different pharmacodynamic properties, which are used in the management of various diseases. In Charaka Samhita, these grains are mainly explained as Pathya (wholesome dietary components), while Sushruta Samhita also highlights their use in therapeutic procedures, showing their wide clinical applicability. These legumes possess well-defined Pharmacodynamics such as Rasa, Guna, Virya, and Vipaka, which guide their use as both food and medicine. They are used internally in formulations like Yuṣha (medicated soups). Recent interpretations by Ayurvedic scholars and emerging scientific evidence support their nutritional value and therapeutic potential, including antioxidant and anti-inflammatory effects. Therefore, Shimbi Dhanya can be considered a link between diet and medicine, with potential for integration into modern

healthcare. This classical knowledge also provides a strong foundation for future research, example randomized controlled trials, to develop standardized pulse-based therapeutic formulations.

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