

A METRICAL ANALYSIS OF *CHANDAS* IN THE *NIDANASTHANA* OF THE *CHARAKA SAMHITA*

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ABSTRACT

The Charaka Samhita is one of the foundational texts of Ayurveda, and its *Nidanasthana* occupies a significant place due to its detailed exposition of the etiology, pathogenesis, clinical features, and prognosis of diseases. The present study aimed to analyze the metrical structure of all verses occurring in the *Nidanasthana* according to the principles of Sanskrit prosody described in Shrutbodh. Each verse was systematically examined and classified based on its metrical pattern. The analysis revealed that *Anushtup* is the predominant meter employed throughout the text, while only a single verse was identified in the *Svagata* metre. A few verses exhibited minor deviations from the classical *Anushtup* pattern described in Shrutbodh. Overall, only two meters were found in the entire *Nidanasthana*, demonstrating a high degree of metrical uniformity. The predominance of *Anushtup* highlights its

suitability for memorization, recitation, and oral transmission of Ayurvedic knowledge. The findings contribute to a better understanding of the literary and pedagogical features of the Charaka Samhita and provide a foundation for further metrical studies of Ayurvedic classics.

KEYWORDS: *Chandas*, Sanskrit Prosody, Charaka Samhita, *Nidanasthana*, *Anushtup*, *Shrutbodh*, Ayurvedic Literature.

INTRODUCTION

The Charaka Samhita is one of the foundational texts of Ayurveda, composed primarily in prose and verse. The metrical arrangement (*Chandas*) of verses plays a crucial role in preserving, transmitting, and facilitating the memorization of medical knowledge. Although literary and philosophical aspects of the Charaka Samhita have been extensively studied, the metrical structure of its *Nidanasthana* has received comparatively little attention. Since *Nidanasthana* deals with the etiology, pathogenesis, and diagnosis of diseases, an analysis of the meters employed may provide insights into the textual organization and pedagogical methods adopted by ancient scholars. Therefore, present study aims to identify, classify, and analyze the various meters used in the *Nidanasthana* of the Charaka Samhita.

OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the meters employed in the *Nidanasthana* of Charaka Samhita.
2. To classify the verses according to their metrical patterns.
3. To assess the frequency and distribution of different meters.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design

It is a descriptive literary study.

Source Material

The critically edited text of Charaka Samhita *Nidanasthana* with the commentary of Chakrapani was used as the primary source. For this study, Charaka Samhita with Ayurvedadeepika commentary edited by Vaidya Jadavji Trikamji published by Chaukhamba Surbharti *Prakashana*, Varanasi, reprinted in 2008, was used.

For metrical analysis, *Shrutbodh* of *Maha Kavi* Kali Dass, edited by *Pandit* Rameshwar Bhatt, published by Khemraj Shri Krishnadass, Bombay in 1911 (online version) was used.

METHODOLOGY

- All verses from the eight chapters of *Nidanasthana* were collected.

- Each verse was analyzed according to the principles of Sanskrit prosody described in Shrutbodh.
- The meter of each verse was identified based on syllabic structure, *gana* arrangement, and *pada* composition.
- The frequency of each meter was recorded and tabulated.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Brief description of meters

Anushtup meter^[1]

It consists of 32 *aksharas* (syllables) divided into four *padas* (quarters) of 8 syllables each.

- 6th syllable of every *pada* is *guru* (-).
- 5th syllable of every *pada* is *laghu* (◡).
- In the 2nd and 4th *padas*, the 7th syllable is *laghu* (*hrasva*).
- In the 1st and 3rd *padas*, the 7th syllable is *guru* (*deergha*).

Table 1: Characteristics patterns of *Anushtup chanda*.

Pada	5 th syllable	6 th syllable	7 th syllable
1 st	<i>laghu</i> (◡)	<i>guru</i> (-)	<i>guru</i> (-)
2 nd	<i>laghu</i> (◡)	<i>guru</i> (-)	<i>laghu</i> (◡)
3 rd	<i>laghu</i> (◡)	<i>guru</i> (-)	<i>guru</i> (-)
4 th	<i>laghu</i> (◡)	<i>guru</i> (-)	<i>laghu</i> (◡)

Svagata meter^[2]

It is derived from *Rathodhdhata* meter by interchanging the 9th and 10th syllables in each *pada* (quarter). Each *pada* of *Svagata* contains 11 syllables, in which the:

- 1st syllable is *guru* (-)
- 3rd syllable is *guru* (-)
- 7th syllable is *guru* (-)
- 9th syllable is *laghu* (◡)
- 10th syllable is *guru* (-)
- Final syllable is *guru* (-)

OBSERVATIONS

1. The *Nidanasthana* of the Charaka Samhita comprises 103 *shloka* (verses) arranged in eight *adhyayas* (chapters).

Table 2: Structure of Charaka Samhita Nidanasthana as per number of prose and verses, present in the book referred.

Name of <i>adhyaya</i>	Number of prose	Number of verses	Total
<i>Jwaranidanam</i>	37	07	44
<i>Raktapittanidanam</i>	11	18	29
<i>Gulmanidanam</i>	16	02	18
<i>Pramehanidanam</i>	29	26	55
<i>Kushthanidanam</i>	11	05	16
<i>Shoshanidanam</i>	12	05	17
<i>Unmadanidanam</i>	17	07	24
<i>Apasmaranidanam</i>	11	33	44
Total	144	103	247

2. *Anushtup* was the predominant meter used throughout the *Nidanasthana* of the Charaka Samhita. All verses except verse 17 of third chapter are in *Anushtup Chanda*.

Example

यथा प्रज्वलितं वेष्म परिषिञ्चन्ति वारिणा ।

नराः शान्तिमभिप्रेत्य तथा जीर्णज्वरे घृतम् ।^[3]

Pada-wise syllable analysis and rule check

Number of syllable in each *pada* – 8

Table 3: Pada-wise syllable analysis and rule check.

Pada	Text	Laghu () – Guru (-) Pattern	Rule Check		Rule Conformity
			(Expected)	(Actual)	
1	यथा प्रज्वलितं वेष्म	य थाप् रज् व x x x x लि तं वेष् म ˘ - - x	5 th position: <i>laghu</i>	˘(satisfied)	Fully follows rule
			6 th position: <i>guru</i>	- (satisfied)	
			7 th position: <i>guru</i>	- (satisfied)	
2	परिषिञ्चन्ति वारिणा	प रि षिञ् चन् x x x x ति वा रि णा ˘ - ˘ x	5 th position: <i>laghu</i>	˘(satisfied)	Fully follows rule
			6 th position: <i>guru</i>	- (satisfied)	
			7 th position: <i>laghu</i>	˘(satisfied)	
3	नराः शान्तिमभिप्रेत्य	न राः शान् ति x x x x म भिप् रेत् य ˘ - - x	5 th position: <i>laghu</i>	˘(satisfied)	Fully follows rule
			6 th position: <i>guru</i>	- (satisfied)	
			7 th position: <i>guru</i>	- (satisfied)	
4	तथा जीर्णज्वरे घृतम्	त था जीर् णज् x x x x व रे घृ तम् ˘ - ˘ x	5 th position: <i>laghu</i>	˘(satisfied)	Fully follows rule
			6 th position: <i>guru</i>	- (satisfied)	
			7 th position: <i>laghu</i>	˘(satisfied)	

Conclusion: Meter – Anushtup

3. Only one verse i.e. verse 17 of chapter 3 was found to be composed in the *Svagata* meter.

गुल्मिनामनिलषान्तिरूपायैः

सर्वषो विधिवदाचरितव्या ।

मारुते ह्यवजितेऽन्यमुदीर्णं

दोषमल्पमपि कर्म निहन्यात् ।^[4]

Pada-wise syllable analysis and rule check

Number of syllable in each *pada* – 11

Table 4: Pada-wise syllable analysis and rule check.

Pada	Text	Laghu () – Guru (-) Pattern	Rule Check		Rule Conformity
			(Expected)	(Actual)	
1	गुल्मिनामनिलषान्तिरूपायैः	गु ल् मि ना म - x - x नि ल शान् ति x x - x रू पा यैः - - -	1 st syllable: <i>guru</i> 3 rd syllable: <i>guru</i> 7 th syllable: <i>guru</i> 9 th syllable: <i>laghu</i> 10 th syllable: <i>guru</i> Final syllable: <i>guru</i>	- (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied)	Fully follows rule
2	सर्वषो विधिवदाचरितव्या ।	स र् व शो वि - x - x धि व दा च x x - x रि तव् या - - -	1 st syllable: <i>guru</i> 3 rd syllable: <i>guru</i> 7 th syllable: <i>guru</i> 9 th syllable: <i>laghu</i> 10 th syllable: <i>guru</i> Final syllable: <i>guru</i>	- (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied)	Fully follows rule
3	मारुते ह्यवजितेऽन्यमुदीर्णं	मा रू तेह् य - x - x व जि तेऽन् य x x - x मु दीर् णं - - -	1 st syllable: <i>guru</i> 3 rd syllable: <i>guru</i> 7 th syllable: <i>guru</i> 9 th syllable: <i>laghu</i> 10 th syllable: <i>guru</i> Final syllable: <i>guru</i>	- (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied)	Fully follows rule
4	दोषमल्पमपि कर्म निहन्यात्	दो ष मल् ष - x - x म पि कर् म x x - x नि हन् यात् - - -	1 st syllable: <i>guru</i> 3 rd syllable: <i>guru</i> 7 th syllable: <i>guru</i> 9 th syllable: <i>laghu</i> 10 th syllable: <i>guru</i> Final syllable: <i>guru</i>	- (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied) - (satisfied)	Fully follows rule

Conclusion: Meter – Svagata

4. A few verses showed minor deviations from the classical *Anushtup* pattern described in *Shrutbodh*.

Example

नहि संषोधनं किञ्चिस्त्यस्य प्रतिमार्गम् ।

प्रतिमार्गं च हरणं रक्तपित्ते विधीयते ।^[5]

Pada-wise syllable analysis and rule check

Number of syllable in each *pada* – 8

Table 5: Pada-wise syllable analysis and rule check.

Pada	Text	Laghu (˘) – Guru (-) Pattern	Rule Check		Rule Conformity
			(Expected)	(Actual)	
1	न हि संषोधनं किञ्चित्	न हि सं शो x x x x ध नं किं चित् ˘ - - x	5 th position: <i>laghu</i>	˘ (satisfied)	Fully follows rule
			6 th position: <i>guru</i>	- (satisfied)	
			7 th position: <i>guru</i>	- (satisfied)	
2	अस्त्यस्य प्रतिमार्गम्	अस्त् यस् यप् र x x x x ति मार् ग गम् ˘ - ˘ x	5 th position: <i>laghu</i>	˘ (satisfied)	Fully follows rule
			6 th position: <i>guru</i>	- (satisfied)	
			7 th position: <i>laghu</i>	˘ (satisfied)	
3	प्रतिमार्गं च हरणं	प् र ति मार् गं x x x x च ह र णं ˘ ˘ ˘ x	5 th position: <i>laghu</i>	˘ (satisfied)	Slight deviations
			6 th position: <i>guru</i>	˘ (deviation)	
			7 th position: <i>guru</i>	˘ (deviation)	
4	रक्तपित्ते विधीयते	रक् त पित् ते x x x x वि धी य ते ˘ - ˘ x	5 th position: <i>laghu</i>	˘ (satisfied)	Fully follows rule
			6 th position: <i>guru</i>	- (satisfied)	
			7 th position: <i>laghu</i>	˘ (satisfied)	

Conclusion: Meter – *Anushtup* (with some deviations)

5. The *Nidanasthana* employs only two meters, indicating a high degree of metrical uniformity.

Table 6: Distribution of Meters in *Nidanasthana*.

Name of <i>adhyaya</i>	Meter	Verse No.
<i>Jwaranidanam</i>	<i>Anushtup</i>	38, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44
	<i>Anushtup</i> (with deviation)	39
<i>Raktapittanidanam</i>	<i>Anushtup</i>	12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29
	<i>Anushtup</i> (with deviation)	19, 20

<i>Gulmanidanam</i>	<i>Anushtup</i> (with deviation)	18
	<i>Svagata</i>	17
<i>Pramehanidanam</i>	<i>Anushtup</i>	13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 41, 42, 43, 44, 50, 51, 52, 53, 55
	<i>Anushtup</i> (with deviation)	54
<i>Kushthanidanam</i>	<i>Anushtup</i>	12, 13, 14, 15, 16
<i>Shoshanidanam</i>	<i>Anushtup</i>	5, 7, 9, 11, 17
<i>Unmadanidanam</i>	<i>Anushtup</i>	9, 19, 20, 22
	<i>Anushtup</i> (with deviation)	21, 23, 24
<i>Apasmaranidanam</i>	<i>Anushtup</i>	12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 19, 20, 22, 24, 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44
	<i>Anushtup</i> (with deviation)	18, 21, 23, 24, 30, 35

DISCUSSION

The present study demonstrates the overwhelming predominance of the *Anushtup* meter in the *Nidanasthana* of the Charaka Samhita. The preference for *Anushtup* is consistent with its widespread use in classical Sanskrit literature, owing to its simplicity, clarity, and suitability for memorization. Since *Ayurvedic* knowledge was traditionally transmitted through oral recitation, the use of a familiar and easily recitable meter would have facilitated the preservation and dissemination of diagnostic and etiological concepts.

The identification of only a single verse in the *Svagata* meter indicates that metrical variation was minimal within the *Nidanasthana*. The minor deviations observed in a few *Anushtup* verses from the rules described in *Srutbodh* are noteworthy; however, as the Charaka Samhita is regarded as an *Arsha Grantha*, such verses are accepted as authoritative components of the text.

Overall, the metrical pattern of the *Nidanasthana* reflects its pedagogical purpose and highlights the important role of *Chandas* in the preservation and transmission of *Ayurvedic* knowledge.

CONCLUSION

The *Nidanasthana* of the Charaka Samhita exhibits a systematic use of Sanskrit meters, with *Anushtup* being the most frequently employed. The metrical arrangement contributes significantly to the preservation, memorization, and effective transmission of diagnostic

knowledge. The study highlights the literary sophistication of *Ayurvedic* texts and underscores the importance of *chandasa*-based investigations in *Ayurvedic* literary research.

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