REVISITING *PANCHĀVAYAVA VĀKYA*: BRIDGING TRADITIONAL AYURVEDIC LOGIC WITH CONTEMPORARY RESEARCH TOOLS

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Abstract:

Ayurveda, the ancient science of life, is deeply rooted in observation, logical reasoning, and practical application. Among the many epistemological tools developed by our Acharyas, the *Panchāvayava Vākya*-comprising *Pratigya* (proposition), *Hetu* (reason), *Dṛṣṭānta* (example), *Upanaya* (application), and *Nigamana* (conclusion)-stands out as a structured method of validating and presenting knowledge. Traditionally associated with the *Nyaya* school of Indian philosophy, this five-part syllogism is also referenced in the *Charaka Samhita* as a *Vaadmarga*, not just for debate but for the logical presentation of ideas.

This article explores the relevance of *Panchāvayava Vākya* in the context of contemporary research methodology. Drawing thoughtful parallels between its components and the modern research process—from hypothesis formulation and literature review to methodology, discussion, and conclusion—the study illustrates that ancient Ayurvedic scholars had an inherently scientific temperament. Concepts like *Pratyakṣa, Anumāna, Āptopadeśa, Upamāna*, and *Yukti* reflect methodologies closely aligned with empirical and analytical tools used today.

By revisiting this classical framework, the paper highlights its potential for bridging traditional Ayurvedic thought with the rigor of evidence-based research. Integrating such logical models can foster clearer communication of Ayurvedic principles to modern scientific audiences and enhance interdisciplinary collaboration. More importantly, it reaffirms that Ayurveda is not merely a system of healing but also a philosophy of knowledge grounded in structured inquiry. Reviving and reinterpreting *Panchāvayava Vākya* can thus offer a meaningful foundation for advancing Ayurvedic research in today's academic and clinical settings. The aim of this study is to analyze the *Panchāvayava Vākya* as a traditional research tool and explore its applicability and relevance in modern Ayurvedic research methodologies.

Key words

INTRODUCTION

Research involves the discovery of new knowledge as well as the systematic re-examination of existing concepts. It is a structured and logical pursuit aimed at understanding phenomena through scientific methods. As famously stated, research involves observing the same reality as others but thinking differently about it. With the continuous progress of modern science, there is an increasing need to present the foundational principles of Ayurveda in a manner that is both practical and scientifically acceptable. This effort is not intended to question the revered *Aptopadesha* of our ancient *Acharyas*, but rather to enhance Ayurveda's relevance and credibility in the contemporary scientific landscape. Ayurveda is fundamentally rooted in careful observation and practical application. In ancient times, Ayurvedic scholars closely studied the natural environment and established correlations with the human body, despite the limited technological resources available to them. One of their key contributions is the concept of *Loka–Purusha Samanya*—the principle that the macrocosm (universe) and microcosm (human body) reflect one another. *Maharshi Charak* articulated this idea, stating that everything found in the universe is also present within the human being[1].

Even without advanced tools, the *Acharyas* possessed a profound understanding of research principles. Numerous references in classical texts show that they conducted practical experiments and documented clinical observations that stand the test of time. *Charak Acharya*, in particular, outlined the qualities of an ideal researcher, which align closely with modern scientific methodology. His works, especially in *Sutra Sthana and Vimana Sthana* of the *Charak Samhita*, discuss research tools such as *Pramana, Panchāvayava*, and *Tantrayukti*.

In today's era of rapid technological progress and global connectivity, all branches of knowledge are evolving. Classical Indian philosophy, with its emphasis on structured reasoning and critical analysis, continues to contribute valuable perspectives. Within this tradition, *Panchāvayava* stands out as a logical model from the *Nyaya* school, offering a systematic method for analyzing and presenting arguments effectively.

Although *Panchāvayava Vaakya*[2]—comprising *Pratigya, Hetu, Udaharana, Upanaya*, and *Nigamana*—is one of the 44 *Vadamarga* described by *Acharya Charak*, its purpose extends beyond merely winning debates or arguments. It also serves as a structured method for presenting and validating one's own theory before a scholarly or scientific audience. In the modern era, where individuals are increasingly logical and demand clear evidence, research has come to rely heavily on laboratory tools, advanced instruments, and technological innovations. However, the foundational mindset, systematic approach, and underlying principles of

contemporary research are closely aligned with those found in ancient Ayurvedic methodology.

THE MODERN RESEARCH PROCESS TYPICALLY INVOLVES THE FOLLOWING STEPS:

- Initiating the study through planning and forming a hypothesis.
- Choosing appropriate research tools and methods.
- Clearly defining general and specific objectives.
- Conducting experiments or applying interventions.
- Collecting and analyzing data.
- Compiling findings into a thesis or dissertation.

Finally, accepting or rejecting the hypothesis based on evidence.

MATERIALS AND METHODS (METHODOLOGY)

This study adopted a qualitative, analytical, and interpretive research design to examine the *Panchāvayava Vākya* a classical Indian logical framework and correlate it with contemporary research methodology.

1. RESEARCH DESIGN AND APPROACH

Type of Study: Conceptual and comparative research.

Approach: Interpretive analysis was used to correlate classical Ayurvedic epistemological tools with modern scientific research components.

Sources of Data: Primary data consisted of classical Ayurvedic texts such as Charak Samhita (especially *Sutra Sthana, Vimana Sthana*), *Nyaya* philosophy texts, and relevant Sanskrit commentaries. Secondary sources included peer-reviewed journal articles, dissertations, and books on research methodology and Indian epistemology.

2. METHOD OF INTERPRETATION

A thematic analysis was conducted to identify parallels between classical Ayurvedic logic and modern research methodology. Comparative tables were used to present conceptual alignment between traditional and contemporary research elements. *Panchāvayava* model was used not only as a philosophical structure but also as a functional research framework.

3. ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

As this study was theoretical and interpretive in nature, it did not involve human or animal subjects, and hence did not require formal ethical clearance. However, all classical references have been duly cited with intellectual integrity.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Research is a methodical process that unfolds through a series of structured steps aimed at investigating a specific problem or question and arriving at dependable conclusions. It is a systematic and well-organized approach that ensures the generation of reliable and valid results. It typically begins with the initiation of the study through careful planning and the formulation of a

hypothesis, which serves as a foundational statement predicting the expected outcome or explaining a phenomenon. Once the hypothesis is established, the researcher moves on to select appropriate research tools and methodologies that align with the study's objectives—these may include qualitative, quantitative, experimental, or observational techniques. The next critical step is to clearly define both general and specific objectives, which guide the direction and scope of the research. With the groundwork laid, the researcher proceeds to conduct experiments or implement relevant interventions, depending on the nature of the study. This is followed by the systematic collection and analysis of data, using appropriate statistical or analytical tools to ensure accuracy and relevance. The findings derived from the analysis are then compiled into a structured format such as a thesis or dissertation, which presents the research process, results, and interpretations comprehensively. Finally, based on the evidence obtained, the researcher arrives at a logical conclusion by either accepting or rejecting the original hypothesis, thus contributing valuable insights to the existing body of knowledge. From the Ayurvedic point of view the process of research is also explained in vividly, more scientifically and clear manner by Acharyas in various *samhitas*. The core principles and steps of research is based on *Panchāvayava Vākya* i.e., *Pratigya, Hetu, Udāharaṇa /Drishtanta, Upanaya, Nigaman*.

COMPONENTS OF THE *PANCHĀVAYAVA* FRAMEWORK:

1. *PRATIGYA*[3] (PROPOSITION OR HYPOTHESIS)- This is the initial assertion or hypothesis put forth by the researcher, representing the problem statement or the central claim to be validated. The process of knowledge validation begins with the articulation of this proposition, followed by its systematic substantiation through subsequent logical components.

2. *HETU* (LOGICAL REASON OR CAUSE)- The *Hetu* serves as the rationale for the proposition. It is supported and verified through classical means of knowledge, or *pramāṇas* , which include:

Āptopadeśa[4] (Authoritative Testimony): The foundational guidance derived from the documented experiences and teachings of ancient sages. These texts serve as critical references in formulating and testing hypotheses.

-PRATYAKṢA[5] (DIRECT PERCEPTION): Regarded as one of the most reliable forms of evidence, it refers to the direct observation of phenomena. *Charak* emphasized the significance of perceptible signs—such as auscultatory findings or joint sounds—in clinical diagnosis. In contemporary practice, these are analogous to modern diagnostic tools such as the stethoscope, endoscope, and thermometer, which extend the range of human senses.

-*ANUMĀNA* [6](INFERENCE): This method involves drawing logical conclusions from

observed data. For instance, the effectiveness of a therapeutic intervention in an arthritic patient can be inferred from improvements in mobility and pain reduction following treatment.

-UPAMĀNA (ANALOGY): Often employed in preclinical research, analogy allows inferences from animal studies to human contexts. This method draws on the principle of *loka-puruṣa sāmānya*—the fundamental correspondence between the universe (macrocosm) and the human being (microcosm).

-YUKTI (RATIONAL APPLICATION)[7]: This is the synthesis of various *pramāṇas* using critical reasoning and contextual judgment. Yukti reflects the analytical process that aligns closely with modern principles of experimental design and data interpretation.

3. DṚṢṬĀNTA / UDĀHARAṆA [8] (Example Or Illustration):

Dṛṣṭānta plays a critical role in facilitating comprehension and acceptance of complex theories. It serves as an explanatory aid that bridges theoretical constructs and practical understanding. Ideally, examples should be universally recognizable and easily grasped by both laypersons and experts *"mūrkha-viduṣhām buddhi"*. When presenting research protocols for ethical review or interdisciplinary evaluation—such as during Institutional Ethics Committee (IEC) approval—well-chosen examples can enhance clarity and reduce the need for extensive explanation. This approach streamlines

communication, conserves resources, and enables researchers to focus on other critical components of study design and implementation.

4. UPANAYA[9] (CORRELATION OR APPLICATION):

Upanaya involves the correlation or application of prior knowledge to a new context. It provides continuity and logical flow in the reasoning process, especially when dealing with unfamiliar or emerging concepts. Researchers often face challenges in accepting or exploring new ideas due to a lack of established validation. However, correlating novel hypotheses with foundational principles from basic sciences—whether Ayurvedic or modern medical science—can enhance credibility and conceptual clarity. This integrative approach promotes interdisciplinary understanding, allowing practitioners from other medical backgrounds to appreciate the principles and potential efficacy of Ayurvedic interventions. Furthermore, comparative methodologies help reduce research errors, particularly Type III errors, by grounding conclusions in both traditional and scientific evidence.

5. NIGAMANA[10] (CONCLUSION):

Nigamana refers to the final conclusion drawn at the end of the research process. It is the resolution that emerges after the problem has been stated *(pratigya)*, analyzed, and explored through systematic reasoning. The conclusion not only provides answers to the research question but also validates or refutes the initial hypothesis. Whether the

findings affirm the hypothesis or not, they contribute to the advancement of knowledge—either by generating new insights or by eliminating uncertainties. As such, drawing meaningful conclusions is a crucial step in any scientific inquiry and must be approached with rigor and intellectual honesty. It marks the culmination of the research journey, transforming curiosity into knowledge.

In conclusion, the *Panchāvayava* framework not only served as a tool for philosophical debate in ancient India but also functioned as a rigorous method for hypothesis formulation and validation. Its logical structure parallels many elements of the modern scientific method, emphasizing that the core research attitudes—systematic observation, hypothesis testing, and logical reasoning—remain consistent across time. Recognizing and integrating these traditional methodologies into contemporary research paradigms could greatly enrich the scientific study of Ayurveda.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Table-1 (Correlation of *Panchāvayava* with modern tools of research.)

Traditional Terms	Modern tools
Pratigya	Hypothesis/Title of Thesis
Hetu	Research methods, techniques, laboratory tools etc.
Udāharaṇa	Previous Research work done on same topic
Upanaya	The discussion and conclusion part of topic
Nigaman	Result, Validation of hypothesis, Conclusion

From the above table we find a meaningful correlation between the traditional components of *Panchāvayava* the five-part structure of logical reasoning in classical Indian philosophy—and the elements of modern research methodology. The first component, Pratijna, which signifies the proposition, aligns with the hypothesis or the title of a thesis, establishing the central research question. *Hetu*, representing the reason or rationale, corresponds to the research methods, techniques, and tools used to explore the hypothesis.

Udaharana, or example, is comparable to previous research work that provides supportive evidence or context for the current study. *Upanaya*, the application of reasoning, is reflected in the discussion and conclusion sections of a research paper, where findings are analyzed and interpreted. Finally, *Nigamana*, which stands for conclusion, is associated with the validation or final confirmation of the hypothesis. This structured comparison demonstrates how the ancient logical framework of *Panchāvayava* continues to hold relevance by

paralleling the systematic approach used in modern scientific research. Thus *Panchāvayava Vākya* framework plays a pivotal role in Ayurvedic research and epistemology. It is not only instrumental in acquiring and validating knowledge but also serves as a systematic methodology for scientific inquiry.

CONCLUSION

The study of *Panchāvayava* not only deepens our appreciation of classical Indian philosophical traditions but also reveals enduring principles of logical reasoning and structured argumentation that remain relevant across cultures and eras. This ancient framework reflects a legacy of disciplined inquiry and intellectual integrity that parallels the goals of modern scientific research.

While there are notable similarities and differences between contemporary research methodologies and the *Panchāvayava Vākya* system of Ayurveda, the latter offers a profound and methodical approach to knowledge acquisition, validation, and presentation. By adopting this classical structure, researchers can more effectively scrutinize, analyze, and substantiate theories—particularly when integrating new findings with established doctrines.

Ultimately, *Panchāvayava* not only guides the logical validation of knowledge but also illuminates the entire epistemic process, offering clarity and direction in the pursuit of truth, especially when exploring innovative insights within traditional frameworks.

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