

A Survey on the Perceived Challenges and Engagement of Undergraduate Ayurveda Students in Rachana Sharir Studies; A Cross Sectional Study

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ABSTRACT

This survey study evaluates the syllabus points of the newly introduced Rachana Sharir subject by NCISM among undergraduate Ayurveda students. The study aims to identify the difficulties faced by students in studying Rachana Sharir and enhance their interest in anatomy. A cross-sectional survey was conducted among 200 students, using an auto-generated Google form to collect responses. The results revealed that topics such as Paribhasha Sharir and Asthi Sharir were perceived as simple, while topics like the Nervous system and Marma Sharir were considered difficult. The study highlights the importance of understanding Rachana Sharir, a broad and crucial subject, in becoming a competent doctor. It emphasizes the need for a comprehensive knowledge of Rachana Sharir to correctly diagnose and treat diseases of the whole body. The findings of this study can inform strategies to improve teaching and learning of Rachana Sharir, ultimately enhancing the quality of Ayurveda education.

KEYWORDS: Ayurveda, BAMS, NCISM, Rachana Sharir, Undergraduate

INTRODUCTION

The ancient Indian system of medicine, *Ayurveda*, encompasses a holistic approach to health and wellness, deeply rooted in the balance of mind, body, and spirit. Among its various branches, *Rachana Sharir*, the study of human anatomy, plays a crucial role in understanding the structural and functional aspects of the human body from an Ayurvedic perspective. Despite its significance, undergraduate Ayurveda students face numerous challenges in grasping the complexities of *Rachana Sharir*, often leading to difficulties in applying anatomical principles in clinical practice.¹

In the year 2022, NCISM has introduced a new competency-based syllabus and assessment methodologies in undergraduate Ayurveda programs. By analysing student's experiences and perceptions, the study seeks to identify key hurdles they encounter, such as the adequacy of teaching resources, curriculum relevance, and pedagogical approaches. Moreover, the research will explore students' interests and motivations in studying *Rachana Sharir*, linking these factors to their overall academic performance and professional aspirations.²

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The objective of this study was to contribute valuable insight to teachers, course developers, and policymakers by focusing on the challenges and interests of Ayurveda graduate students.

To achieve these objectives, the research will be guided by several key questions:

1. What challenges do undergraduate Ayurveda students face in studying *Rachana Sharir*?
2. How do students perceive the relevance and effectiveness of the current syllabus and assessment methods in their understanding of *Rachana Sharir*?
3. What factors influence students' interests and motivations in the study of *Rachana Sharir*?
4. In what ways can the curriculum and pedagogical approaches be improved to enhance students' learning experiences in *Rachana Sharir*?³

To answer these questions, a mixed-methods approach will be employed, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. This methodology will allow for a comprehensive understanding of students' experiences, incorporating both statistical analysis of survey data and in-depth insights from personal interviews.

AIMS:

1. To investigate the difficulties faced by undergraduate Ayurveda students in understanding and learning *Rachana Sharir*.
2. To identify the factors influencing students' interests and engagement in studying *Rachana Sharir*.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Assessment of the level of difficulty experienced by undergraduate Ayurveda students in learning of *Rachana Sharir*.
2. To identify potentially difficult areas of the curriculum to enhance students' understanding and interest in *Rachana Sharir*.

STUDY DESIGN

Study type: Cross-sectional study

Purpose: To identify the challenges and difficulties faced by undergraduate Ayurveda students in learning *Rachana Sharir*, and explore their interests and engagement in the subject.

Timing: Cross-sectional (No timing is taken)

End point:

1. **Identification of Challenges:** A comprehensive list of challenges faced by undergraduate Ayurveda students in learning *Rachana Sharir*.
2. **Determination of Interest Levels:** An understanding of the level of interest and

engagement among undergraduate Ayurveda students in studying *Rachana Sharir*.

Number of groups: 1

Sample size: 200

Participants:

1. Undergraduate Ayurveda students currently enrolled in *Rachana Sharir* courses.
2. Students from 3 Ayurveda institutions.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Data Collection Tools:

Survey Forms: Online survey forms to collect data on students' experiences, difficulties, and suggestions.

Study Instruments:

Rachana Sharir Syllabus: Copies of the *Rachana Sharir* syllabus to analyze the content and structure.

Technology and Software:

1. **Online Survey Platforms:** Google Forms to create and distribute online surveys.⁴
2. **Data Analysis Software:** Statistical software like SPSS, Excel to analyze quantitative data.

Methodology:

- To carry out this study, all the points of the new *Rachana Sharir* syllabus released by NCISM were studied in depth.⁵
- Then an online goggle form was created to assess the syllabus points of the subject.
- After that, the response of the graduating students of various Ayurveda colleges was received.
- The responses received from the students were analysed and accordingly the seriousness of all the syllabus points of the subject was known.
- At the end, all the data of the results from the entire analysis were tabulated and an attempt was made to understand all the complexities faced by the students in the study of anatomy to facilitate the study of *Rachana Sharir* in the future.

OBSERVATION & RESULT

A. Distribution of students according to gender - The study included a total of 200 students, consisting of 96 females and 104 males.

B. Distribution of students according to colleges - A total of three Ayurveda colleges were included in the study, from which 164 students were from Institute of Teaching & Research in Ayurveda, Jamnagar, 26 from Post Graduation Institute of Ayurveda, Jodhpur, and 10 from Shekhawati Ayurved Medical college, Pilani (Jhunjhunu).

C. Distribution of students according to Bams batch- A total of two BAMS batches were included in the study, from which 83 students

were from batch-2022-23, and 117 from batch-2023-24.

Table-1 Distribution of students according to BAMS admission batch

BAMS BATCH	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	PERCENTAGES
2022-23	83	41.5%
2023-24	117	58.5%
Total	200	100%

➤ **RESULTS (As per Ayurveda syllabus points)**

- 1. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Shariopkramaniya Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 137 students described the topic of *Shariopkramaniya Shaarira* as easy, 63 students as medium, and no students described this topic as hard.
- 2. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Paribhasha Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 115 students described the topic of *Paribhasha Shaarira* as easy, 77 students as medium, and 8 students described this topic as hard.
- 3. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Garbha Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 35 students described the topic of *Garbha Shaarira* as easy, 107 students as medium, and 58 students described this topic as hard.
- 4. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Asthi Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 117 students described the topic of *Asthi Shaarira* as easy, 76 students as medium, and 7 students described this topic as hard.
- 5. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Sandhi Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 105 students described the topic of *Sandhi Shaarira* as easy, 85 students as medium, and 10 students described this topic as hard.
- 6. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Snayu Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 113 students described the topic of *Snayu Shaarira* as easy, 80 students as medium, and 7 students described this topic as hard.
- 7. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Peshi Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 115 students described the topic of *Peshi Shaarira* as easy, 73 students as medium, and 12 students described this topic as hard.

- 8. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Kesha, Danta, Nakha Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 57 students described the topic of *Kesha, Danta, Nakha Shaarira* as easy, 107 students as medium, and 36 students described this topic as hard.
- 9. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Pramana Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 114 students described the topic of *Pramana Shaarira* as easy, 69 students as medium, and 17 students described this topic as hard.
- 10. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Koshtha Evam Ashaya Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 76 students described the topic of *Koshtha Evam Ashaya Shaarira* as easy, 102 students as medium, and 22 students described this topic as hard.
- 11. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Sira Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 94 students described the topic of *Sira Shaarira* as easy, 89 students as medium, and 17 students described this topic as hard.
- 12. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Dhamani Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 115 students described the topic of *Dhamani Shaarira* as easy, 69 students as medium, and 16 students described this topic as hard.
- 13. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Strotas Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 61 students described the topic of *Strotas Shaarira* as easy, 107 students as medium, and 32 students described this topic as hard.
- 14. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Kala Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 83 students described the topic of *Kala Shaarira* as easy, 103 students as medium, and 14 students described this topic as hard.
- 15. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Indriya Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 83 students described the topic of *Indriya Shaarira* as easy, 103 students as medium, and 14 students described this topic as hard.
- 16. Students' responses regarding the topic of *Twacha Shaarira*-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 99 students described the topic of *Twacha Shaarira* as easy,

89 students as medium, and 12 students described this topic as hard.

17. **Students' responses regarding the topic of Marma Shaarira-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 19 students described the topic of *Marma Shaarira* as easy, 78 students as medium, and 103 students described this topic as hard.

➤ **RESULTS (As per Modern syllabus points)**

1. **Students' responses regarding the topic of Embryology-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 18 students described the topic of Embryology as easy, 97 students as medium, and 85 students described this topic as hard.
2. **Students' responses regarding the topic of Osteology-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 23 students described the topic of Osteology as easy, 78 students as medium, and 99 students described this topic as hard.
3. **Students' responses regarding the topic of Arthrology-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 26 students described the topic of Arthrology as easy, 106 students as medium, and 68 students described this topic as hard.
4. **Students' responses regarding the topic of Myology-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 18 students described the topic of Myology as easy, 66 students as medium, and 116 students described this topic as hard.
5. **Students' responses regarding the topic of Nervous system-** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 19 students described the topic of Nervous system as easy, 41 students as medium, and 140 students described this topic as hard.
6. **Students' responses regarding the topic of Endocrinology -** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 40 students described the topic of Endocrinology as easy, 118 students as medium, and 42 students described this topic as hard.

7. **Students' responses regarding the topic of Lymphatic system -** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 40 students described the topic of Lymphatic system as easy, 118 students as medium, and 42 students described this topic as hard.

8. **Students' responses regarding the topic of Respiratory system -** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 53 students described the topic of Respiratory system as easy, 116 students as medium, and 31 students described this topic as hard.

9. **Students' responses regarding the topic of Digestive system -** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 47 students described the topic of Digestive system as easy, 101 students as medium, and 52 students described this topic as hard.

10. **Students' responses regarding the topic of Cardiovascular system -** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 34 students described the topic of Cardiovascular system as easy, 101 students as medium, and 65 students described this topic as hard.

11. **Students' responses regarding the topic of Urinary system -** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 52 students described the topic of Urinary system as easy, 106 students as medium, and 42 students described this topic as hard.

12. **Students' responses regarding the topic of Reproductive system -** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 43 students described the topic of Reproductive system as easy, 111 students as medium, and 46 students described this topic as hard.

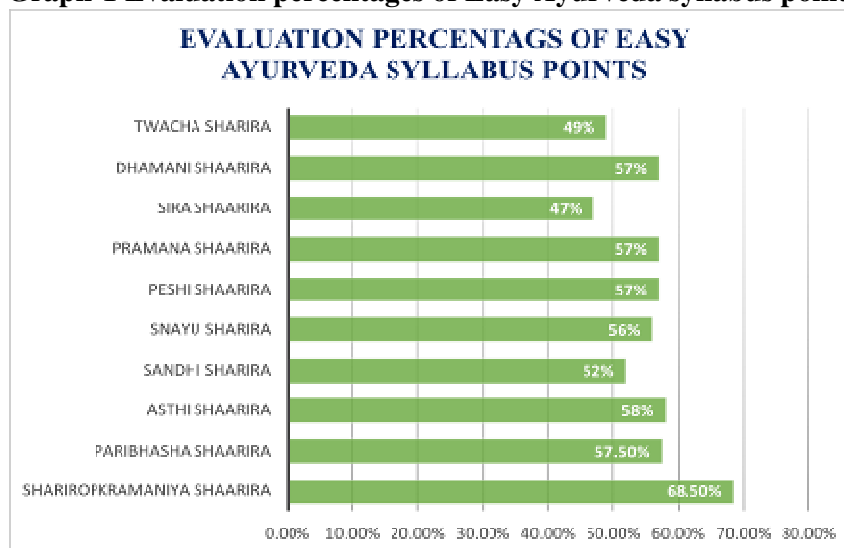
13. **Students' responses regarding the topic of Sensory organs -** A total of three types of responses were collected, in which 32 students described the topic of Sensory organs as easy, 84 students as medium, and 84 students described this topic as hard.

Table-2 Overall evaluation of Ayurveda syllabus points

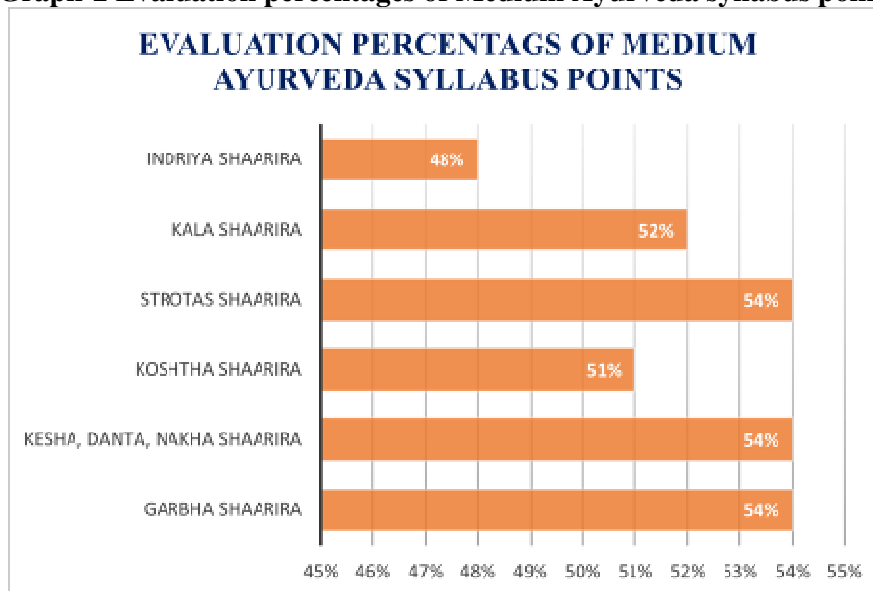
AYURVEDA SYLLABUS POINTS		
OVERALL GRADING	SYLLABUS POINTS	EVALUATION PERCENTAGS
Easy	1. Shariropkramaniya Shaarira	68.5%
	2. Paribhasha Shaarira	57.5%
	3. Asthi Shaarira	58%
	4. Sandhi Sharira	52%
	5. Snayu Sharira	56%
	6. Peshi Shaarira	57%
	7. Pramana Shaarira	57%
	8. Sira Shaarira	47%
	9. Dhamani Shaarira	57%
	10. Twacha Sharira	49%
Medium	1. Garbha Shaarira	54%
	2. Kesha, Danta, Nakha Shaarira	54%
	3. Koshtha Shaarira	51%
	4. Strotas Shaarira	54%
	5. Kala Shaarira	52%
	6. Indriya Shaarira	48%
Hard	1. Marma Shaarira	52%

Table-3 Overall evaluation of Modern syllabus points

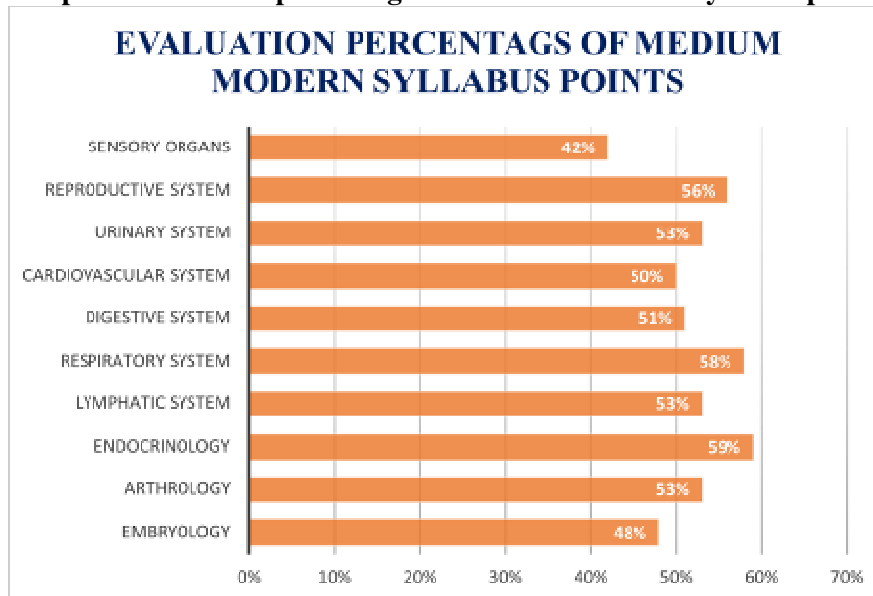
MODERN SYLLABUS POINTS		
OVERALL GRADING	SYLLABUS POINTS	EVALUATION PERCENTAGS
Easy	Not any syllabus point	
Medium	1. Embryology	48%
	2. Arthrology	53%
	3. Endocrinology	59%
	4. Lymphatic system	53%
	5. Respiratory system	58%
	6. Digestive system	51%
	7. Cardiovascular system	50%
	8. Urinary system	53%
	9. Reproductive system	56%
	10. Sensory organs	42%
Hard	1. Osteology	50%
	2. Myology	58%
	3. Nervous system	70%
	4. Sensory organs	42%

Graph-1 Evaluation percentages of Easy Ayurveda syllabus points

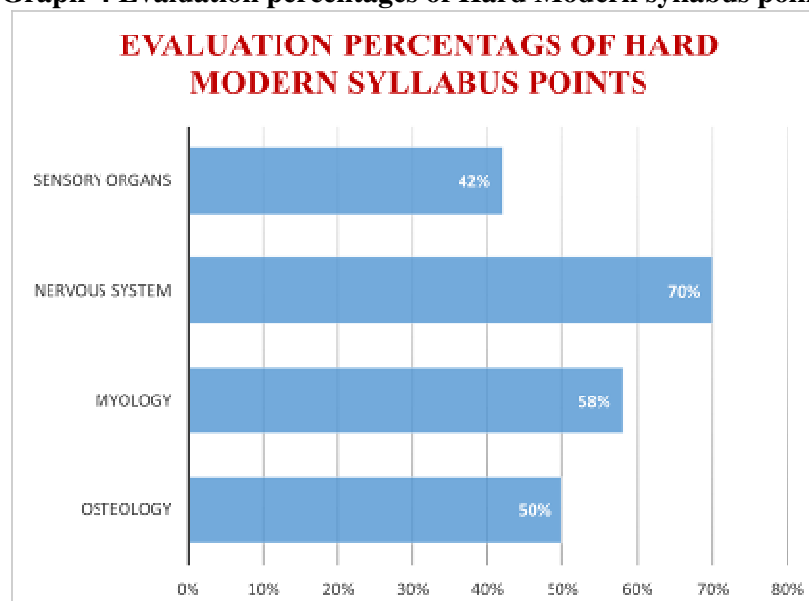
Graph-2 Evaluation percentages of Medium Ayurveda syllabus points



Graph-3 Evaluation percentages of Medium Modern syllabus points



Graph-4 Evaluation percentages of Hard Modern syllabus points



DISCUSSION & CONCLUSION

- *Rachana Sharir* is a crucial subject within the field of Ayurveda. Therefore, it is essential for every aspiring Ayurveda practitioner to study this topic in considerable depth.
- In order to teach and explain *Rachana Sharir* subject in depth, the *Rachana Sharir* subject lecturers & MD scholars must first understand it thoroughly. This requires a proper grasp of the content and the preparation of a complete outline.
- That has been the main objective of this study. This study is an effort in this direction, the analysis of the results of which will help us to move in this direction.
- From the above results, all the syllabus points of this subject can be evaluated, the main points of which are as follows:
 - *Shariropkramaniya Shaarira, Paribhasha Shaarira, Asthi Shaarira, Sandhi Sharira, Snayu Sharira, Peshi Shaarira, Pramana Shaarira, Sira Shaarira, Dhamani Shaarira, Twacha Sharira* were Ayurveda syllabus points whose overall assessment was Easy. Therefore, it is easy to explain these syllabus points to the students, so there is no need to prepare a strict outline for such topics.
 - *Garbha Shaarira, Kesha, Danta, Nakha Shaarira, Koshtha Shaarira, Strotas Shaarira, Kala Shaarira, Indriya Shaarira* were Ayurveda syllabus points whose overall assessment was medium. Therefore, there is some difficulty in explaining these syllabus points to the students, so the composition for such topics needs to prepare a new framework for the *Rachana Sharir* teachers and scholars so that it is easy to understand these topics as well.
 - *Marma Sharir* was such Ayurveda syllabus Points whose overall evaluation was hard. Therefore, the *Marma Sharir* subject have to face a lot of difficulty in understanding the students, so the

composition for this topic needs to prepare a new and effective outline for the *Rachana Sharir* teachers and scholars, so that it is easy to understand this topic as well.

- There were no modern syllabus points, whose overall evaluation was Easy. This proves that modern syllabus points are more troubled in understanding students than Ayurveda.
- Embryology, Arthrology, Endocrinology, Lymphatic system, Respiratory system, Digestive system, Cardiovascular system, Urinary system, Reproductive system, Sensory organs Modern syllabus points whose overall assessment was medium. Therefore, there is some difficulty in explaining these syllabus points to the students, so the composition for such topics needs to prepare a new framework for the *Rachana Sharir* teachers and scholars so that it is easy to understand these topics as well.
- Osteology, Myology, Nervous system, Sensory organs were such Modern syllabus Points whose overall evaluation was hard. Therefore, these subjects have to face a lot of difficulty in understanding the students, so the composition for this topic needs to prepare a new and effective outline for the *Rachana Sharir* teachers and scholars, so that it is easy to understand this topic as well.

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