

Role of Visabilwadi agad in Seborrhoeic dermatitis: A Review Article

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ABSTRACT-

Visha bilwadi agad is mentioned in malayalam book Kriya Kaumudi written by Kuttikrishnon menon. It contains all ingredients similar to Bilwadi agad, with addition of neelini (*Indigofera tinctoria*), eshvari (*Aristolochia indica*) and patha (*Cyclea peltate*). Most of drugs of Visha bilwadi agada has ushna veerya, vataghna and kaphghna property. By these properties the drug visha bilwadi agada may give relief in various signs and symptoms produced due to vicharchika like swelling, itching and urticarial actions. Most of the drug having anti-inflammatory, analgesics, blood purifying, kanduhara (itching), sophahara (swelling) properties reduces the signs and symptoms of Vicharchika.

Vicharchika, a subtype of *Kshudra Kushtha* described in Ayurvedic text Charaka Samhita, is a chronic inflammatory skin disorder characterized by *kandu* (itching), *pidika* (eruptions), *bahusrava* (oozing), *rukshata* (dryness), *raji* (lichenification), and discoloration of the skin. It is primarily caused by the vitiation of *Kapha dosha* along with the involvement of *Pitta* and *Vata*, leading to disturbance in normal functioning of *rasa* and *rakta dhatus* and accumulation of *ama*. Vicharchika aligns with the pathophysiological features of seborrhoeic dermatitis, including excessive sebum production and inflammatory response. According to modern dermatology, seborrhoeic dermatitis is a chronic, recurrent inflammatory dermatosis that primarily affects seborrhoeic areas such as the scalp, face, and upper trunk. Its etiology is multifactorial, including sebaceous gland activity, immune dysregulation, skin barrier dysfunction and is often associated with *Malassezia* species colonization, altered sebum production, and immune dysregulation.

Visabilwadi Agad, a classical Ayurvedic polyherbal formulation described under Agad *Tantra*, is traditionally indicated for conditions involving toxins (*visha*), inflammation, and systemic imbalance. Its potential role in dermatological disorders has gained attention due to its broad spectrum of pharmacological properties. The formulation contains multiple herbal ingredients known for their anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, antifungal, antioxidant, and immunomodulatory activities. These properties are particularly relevant in the management of seborrhoeic dermatitis, where fungal colonization, inflammation, and altered skin barrier function are key pathogenic factors. The main objective of this review article is to discuss the different pharmacological properties of its contents with respect to vicharchika.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Agad tantra, Visha bilwadi agad, Dushivisha, neelini, Ishwari, patha, seborrhoeic dermatitis, vicharchika

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1. INTRODUCTION –

Agad Tantra is defined as branch of ayurveda that deals with poison(*visha*), their effects on body, diagnosis, prevention and treatment of poisoning. It not only deals with acute poisoning but also describes subtle, long-term toxic influences on the body. One such concept is

Dushi Vishat, which refers to a residual, weak or latent poison that remains in the body for a long time after incomplete elimination. Unlike acute poison, it does not cause immediate severe symptoms but gradually affects the body and contributes to chronic disease processes.

Dushi visha can cause various diseases like indigestion, anorexia, psoriasis, leukoderma, *Dhatu kshaya*, swelling in hand & feet, ascites, vomiting, diarrhoea, discoloration, syncope, typhoid, mania & skin disorders (*kustha*)ⁱⁱ. All skin diseases are considered as one of the broad headings of '*kustha*' which is further divided into *Maha kustha* and *Kshudra kustha*. *Vicharchika* is one of the *Khudra kustha*, is a condition characterized by *Kandu* (Intense itching), *Pidika* (Eruptions), *Srava* (Oozing), *Rukshata* (Dryness), Discoloration (*Shyava varna*). *Vicharchika* arises primarily due to the vitiation of *Kapha*ⁱⁱⁱ (*charak & vagbhat*) and *Pitta* (*susurut*) doshas along with the involvement of *Vata*, leading to imbalance in *Rasa* and *Rakta dhatu*s, obstruction of microchannels (*srotas*), and accumulation of metabolic toxins (*ama*). A key factor contributing to the chronicity and recurrent nature of *Vicharchika* is *Dushivisha*, the presence of latent or residual toxins in the body that persist over time and gradually vitiate the doshas and *dhatu*s.

These clinical features bear a significant resemblance to seborrhoeic dermatitis^{iv}, a common chronic inflammatory skin disorder in modern dermatology that predominantly affects sebaceous gland rich areas such as the scalp, face, and upper trunk. Seborrhoeic dermatitis presents with erythema, greasy or yellowish scaling, mild oozing, and persistent itching, often following a relapsing remitting course. It is an Inflammatory state, sebum dysregulation, and microbial colonization, particularly by *Malassezia* species, observed in seborrhoeic dermatitis by addressing both symptomatic relief and underlying pathophysiology, Visabilwadi Agad can potentially reduce inflammation, control microbial proliferation, alleviate itching, and restore skin homeostasis., and thickening of the skin(*raji*).

2.1. CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

Pathophysiology of *Vicharchika*-

The pathogenesis of *Vicharchika* begins with various etiological factors (*Hetu*), such as consumption of incompatible diet (*Viruddha Ahara*), excessive or improper food (*Vishaja Ahara*), exposure to environmental toxins, improper lifestyle habits, and chronic stress, which disturbs digestion that leads to formation of *ama* (toxic compound), *ama* is a toxic compound which trigger the vitiation of *Kapha* and *Pitta* doshas, with *Vata* becoming involved in chronic stages. The vitiated doshas first affect the *Rasa dhatu*, followed by *Rakta dhatu* and later *Mamsa dhatu*, leading to impaired nourishment, inflammation, and chronic thickening of the skin. The process is compounded by obstruction of *Twak srotas* (skin channels), which prevents normal circulation and elimination of toxins, allowing accumulation and aggravation (*Sanchaya and Prakopa*) of the doshas. As the vitiated doshas move and localize in the skin (*Prasara and Sthana Samshraya*), clinical manifestations appear, including intense itching (*kandu*), papulovesicular eruptions (*pidika*), oozing (*bahusrava*), scaling, and discoloration (*shyava varna*).

This stage of manifestation (*Vyakti*) represents the fully developed *Vicharchika*, and variations in presentation (*Bheda*) may occur depending on the predominant dosha and chronicity, highlighting the complex, relapsing, and persistent nature of the disease.

Pathophysiology of Seborrhoeic dermatitis-

Seborrhoeic dermatitis is a chronic, inflammatory dermatosis characterized by erythematous plaques with overlying greasy, yellowish scales. Its pathophysiology is complex, involving a multi-faceted interaction between skin flora, sebum production, and the host's immune response.

Sebaceous gland hyperactivity-

Increased activity of sebaceous glands leads to excessive sebum production. Seborrhoeic dermatitis commonly affects sebaceous gland rich areas such as the scalp, face, chest, and upper back.

Role of *Malassezia* yeast-

Lipophilic yeasts of the genus *Malassezia* colonize sebum-rich skin. These yeasts metabolize triglycerides present in sebum into free fatty acids. Irritating metabolites disrupt the skin barrier and trigger inflammation.

Altered skin barrier function-

Damage to the epidermal barrier increases transepidermal water loss. Increased skin permeability allows penetration of irritants and microbial products. This enhances local inflammatory reactions.

Inflammatory immune response-

Activation of innate and adaptive immune pathways occurs in response to fungal antigens and lipid metabolites. Increased production of inflammatory cytokines such as IL-1, IL-6, IL-8, and TNF- α contributes to erythema and scaling.

Abnormal epidermal proliferation-

Accelerated turnover of keratinocytes leads to excessive scaling and flaking. Incomplete keratinocyte maturation results in greasy yellow-white scales.

Sebum composition abnormalities-

Alteration in lipid composition of sebum may favour fungal proliferation and inflammation. Reduced skin surface lipids with altered cholesterol and fatty acid balance have been observed.

Sign and symptoms-

Vicharchika in Ayurveda corresponds closely to seborrhoeic dermatitis in modern terms. It is primarily a *Kapha-Pitta* vitiation skin disorder. The signs and symptoms are as follows:

1. Rashes and Papules - Red, itchy, inflamed patches on the skin that may coalesce into larger areas.
2. Severe Itching (*Kandu*) - Intense itching that worsens at night or with sweating.
3. Oozing or Exudation (*Srava*) - In some cases, the lesions may ooze a clear or yellowish fluid.

4. Crusting and Scaling (Vesicular & Crusty lesions) - Chronic stages show thickened, scaly skin with crusts.
5. Burning Sensation (*Daha*) - Burning over the affected areas due to Pitta involvement.
6. Swelling (*Shopha*) - Mild oedema may occur in inflamed areas.
7. Darkening or Discoloration (*Shyava Varna*) - Long-standing lesions may show hyperpigmentation.
8. Pain (*Shool*) - Occasional mild pain, especially if lesions are scratched or secondarily infected.
9. Cracks and Fissures - In chronic cases, thickened skin may develop cracks that are painful.

3.METHADODOLOGY

Drug review

Visabilwadi Agad has content like *Ishwari, neelini, patha, triphala, trikatu, haridra, daru haridra, bilwa, sursa, karanj, devdaru, tagar, basta mutra* etc. Most of drugs of *Visha bilwadi agada* has *ushna veerya, vataghna and kaphghna* property. The drug *visha bilwadi agada* gives relief in various signs and symptoms produced due to *vicharchika* like swelling, itching, redness, oozing. Most of the drug having anti-inflammatory, antiseptic, antifungal, antimicrobial, antiviral, analgesic, cardio protective and neuro protective activity. which helps in breaking the pathogenesis of *vicharchik*.

S.N o.	Drug and Botanical name	Rasa	Guna	virya	Vipaka	Dosha shamakta	Properties
1.	<i>Bilva</i> ^v (Aegle marmalose)	<i>Kashaya Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu, Rooksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha vatahara</i>	<i>Deepaniya, pachan, sangrahi, rasayan, grahi, krimighna</i>
2.	<i>Tulsi</i> (Ocimum santum) ^{vi}	<i>Katu, Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu Rooksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha vatahara</i>	<i>Krimighna, Visaroga Twagvikara, Kasa, Shwasa, Parshwashoola,</i>
3.	<i>Karanja</i> ^{vii} (Pongamia pinnatta)	<i>Tikta, Katu, Kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu Snigdha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha vatahara</i>	<i>Kustha, Sotha, Krimi, Udavarata, Gulma, Arsas, Yoniroga</i>
4.	<i>Devadaru</i> ^{viii} (Cedrus deodera)	<i>Tikta, Katu, Kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu Rooksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha vatahara</i>	<i>Kustha, Vyanga, Adhmana, Krimi, Shotha, Vedana, Twagvikara, Kandu, Vrana, Vatarakta,</i>
5.	<i>Harithaki</i> ^{ix} (Terminalia chebula)	<i>Pancha rasa except lavana</i>	<i>Laghu Rooksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhu raa</i>	<i>Tridosahara</i>	<i>Kustha, Vrana, Vatarakta, Agnimandya, a, Shoola, Anaha, Gulma, Kamala, Yakritpleehavridhi</i>
6.	<i>Vibhithaki</i> ^x (Terminalia bellerica)	<i>Kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu Rooksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhu ra</i>	<i>Kapha pittahara</i>	<i>Jvara, Kasa, Svasa, Atisara, Asmari, Chardi, Trsna,</i>
7.	<i>Amalaki</i> ^{xi} (Embelica officinalis)	<i>Amla pradana pancha rasa</i>	<i>Laghu Rooksha</i>	<i>Sita</i>	<i>Madhu ra</i>	<i>Tridosahara</i>	<i>Kustha, Arsas, Prameha, Rakta pitta, Netra roga, Pradara, Mutrakriccha, Sula</i>
8.	<i>Tagara</i> ^{xii} (Valeriana wallichii)	<i>Tiktha, Katu, Kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu Snigdha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha vatahara</i>	<i>Anidra, Siroroga, Apasmara, Netraroga, Vishaghna, tridoshara, raktadoshahara, manasikadoshahara</i>
9.	<i>Sunthi</i> ^{xiii} (Zingib er officinale)	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Guru, Rooksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhu ra</i>	<i>Kapha vatahara</i>	<i>Vatavyadhi, sheetaprashamana, Vedanasthapana, vatashamaka, Deepana-</i>
10.	<i>Maricha</i> ^{xiv} (Piper nigrum)	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Laghu Rooksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha vatahara</i>	<i>Deepana-pachana, yakriduttejaka, Vatanulomana, kaphanissarak</i>
11.	<i>Pippali</i> ^{xv} (Piper longum)	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Laghu Rooksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Madhu ra</i>	<i>Kapha vatahara</i>	<i>Shotha, Vatavyadhi, Rajorodha, Aruchi, Agnimandya, Ajeerna, Vatanulomana.</i>
12.	<i>Haridra</i> ^{xvi} (Curcuma longa)	<i>Tikta, Katu</i>	<i>Laghu Rooksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha pittahara</i>	<i>Aruchi, Vibandha, Shitapitta, Kushtha.</i>
13.	<i>Daruharidra</i> ^{xvii} (Berberis aristata)	<i>Tikta, Kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu Rooksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha vatahara</i>	<i>Shothahara, Deepana, Yakriduttejaka, Pittasaraka, Grahi, Raktashodhak</i>
14.	<i>Neelini</i> ^{xviii} (Indigofera tinctoria)	<i>Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu Rooksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha vatahara</i>	<i>Sosha, Sarpa visa, Krimi danta</i>
15.	<i>Ishwari</i> ^{xix} (Aristo lochia indica)	<i>Tikta, Katu, Kashaya</i>	<i>Laghu Rooksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>kapha vatahara</i>	<i>Vishaghna, tridoshara, raktadoshahara,</i>

							<i>Vrana, sarpa, luta, musika, vrschika visa</i>
16.	<i>Patha^{xx}</i> (Cyclea petate)	<i>Tikta</i>	<i>Laghu Rooksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Tridosahara</i>	<i>Atisara, Chardi, Sula, Jvara, Kustha, Kandu, Krimi, Hridyarooga, Gulma, Yoni roga</i>
17.	<i>Ajamootra</i> (Capra aegagrus hircus)	<i>Katu, Lavana</i>	<i>Laghu Rooksha</i>	<i>Ushna</i>	<i>Katu</i>	<i>Kapha vatahara</i>	<i>Shosha, sophra, Aruchi, Pandu, Krimi, Gulma, Kamla, vatahara, Shwasa</i>

Table 2: Properties of Ingredients in *Visha Bilwadi Agad*

<i>Shulahara</i>	<i>Sophahara</i>	<i>Vishahara</i>	<i>Kanduhara</i>	<i>Rakta dosha hara</i>
<i>Pippali</i>	<i>Tulasi</i>	<i>Tulasi</i>	<i>Tulasi</i>	<i>Tagara</i>
<i>Maricha</i>	<i>Karanja</i>	<i>Karanja</i>	<i>Karanja</i>	
<i>Sunthi</i>	<i>Devadaru</i>	<i>Tagara</i>	<i>Devadaru</i>	
<i>Amalaki</i>	<i>Harithaki</i>	<i>Haridra</i>	<i>Haridra</i>	
	<i>Amalaki</i>	<i>Neeli</i>	<i>Daruharidra</i>	
	<i>Sunthi</i>	<i>Ishvari</i>		
	<i>Haridra</i>	<i>Patha</i>		
	<i>Daruharidra</i>	<i>Daruharidra</i>		
	<i>Patha</i>	<i>Maricha</i>		

DISCUSSION-

The therapeutic relevance of *Visabilwadi Agad* in the management of *Vicharchika* can be understood through its pharmacological properties such as *Tikta rasa*, *ushna virya*, *ruksha guna*, *Katu vipaka* described in *Ayurvedic* literature.

Chart 1: Analysis of *Rasa* of contents in *Visa bilwadi agad*

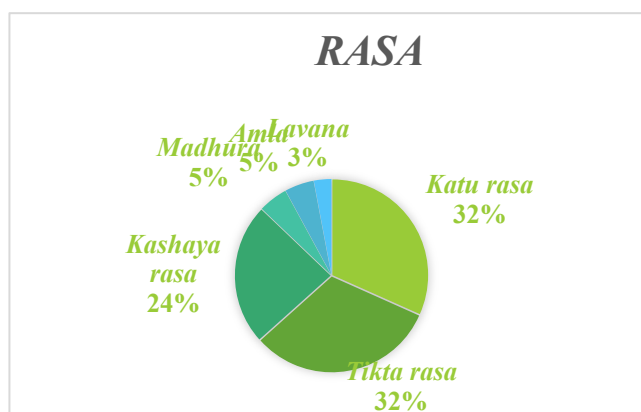


Chart 2: Analysis of *Guna* of contents in *Visa bilwadi agad*

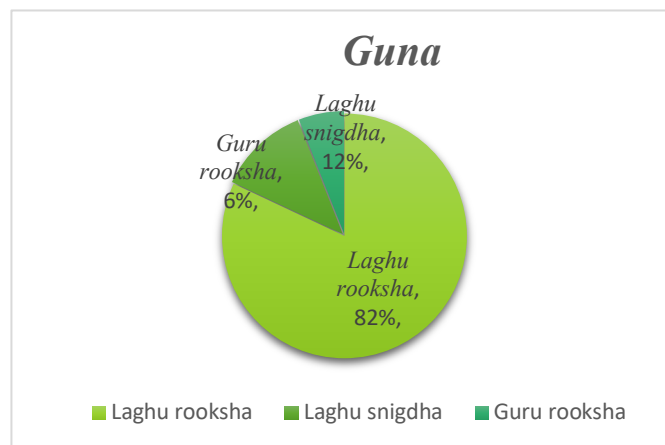


Chart 3: Analysis of *Veerya* of contents in *Visa bilwadi agad*

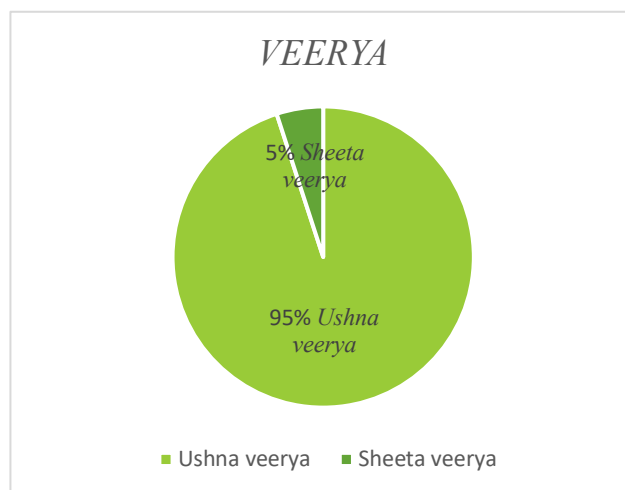


Chart 4: Analysis of *Vipaka* of contents in *Visa bilwadi agad*

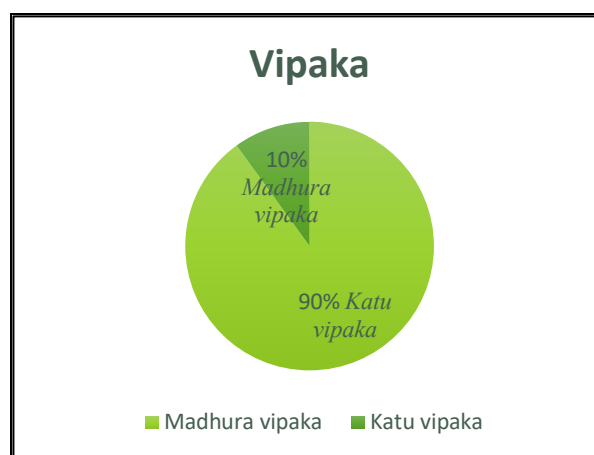
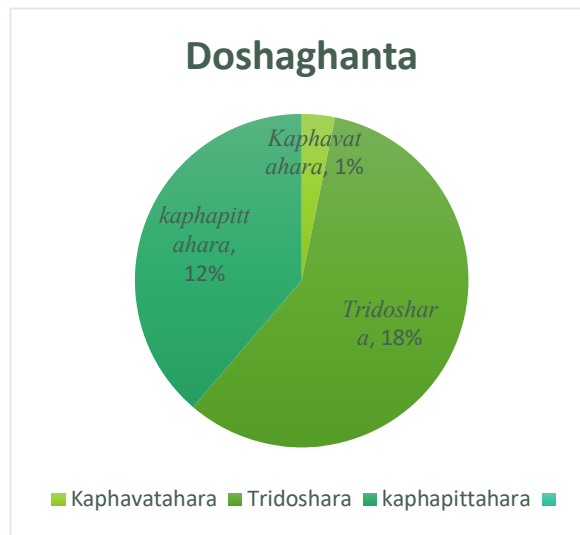


Chart 5: Analysis of *Doshaghanta* of contents in *Visa bilwadi agad*



According to *Rasa Panchak* of *Visabilwadi agad* its probable mode of action is-

On considering *Rasa, Guna, Veerya, Vipaka* and *Doshaghanta*

- The predominance of *Kashaya Tikta, Katu*, and *rasa* in *Visa Bilwadi Agada* is highly relevant for the management of *Vicharchika*, because these *rasas* help to reduce *Kapha, Pitta* and *Kleda*. In many contents like *Bilva, Tulsi, Karanja, Devadaru, Haridra, Daruharidra, Tikta rasa* is dominant which acts as *Visha hara, Krimihara, Daha prashmana, Kandu hara, Trishna prashmana, Kusthaghna, Lekhana*^{xxi} and also *Kapha-Pita Shamaka* which helps to reduce oozing/thick lesions, redness & burning.

- In *Vicharchika*, impaired digestion and *Ama* formation are important pathogenic factors. In *Tulsi, Sunthi, Maricha, Pippali, Haridra, Katu rasa* is present which acts as *Agni Deepana, Kanduhara, Krimihara, Sroto vivarana*^{xxii} which helps in reducing thickening of skin, itching, improves metabolism, supports detoxification.

In *Bilva, Karanja, Devadaru, Haritaki* and *Daruharidra, Kashaya rasas* is present which acts as *Sandhan kara, Roopana, Soshana, Stambhan, Rakta prasmana, lekhan, Twachya*^{xxiii} which ultimately helps to reduce oozing, inflammation, excoriation, wet eczema, decreasing secondary infection risk.

- In *Visabilwadi agad Laghu* and *ruksha guna* is dominant. *Laghu guna* acts as *kaphahara*; which reduces malas and clears the channels of body. *Ruksha guna* promotes *Stambhana, Shoshan, Rukshan* properties which helps to reduce *srava*(oozing), absorb excess moisture from lesion, decreases itching caused by *Kapha* and *Kleda*.

- The *Ushna veerya* of *Visabilwadi agad* neutralise *Kapha dosha* as *kapha* is *Sheeta, Snigdha*, and *Manda*. *Ushna veerya* increase *Deepana* and *pachan*

which help to enhance and stimulate the weakened digestive fire (*Agni*). These drugs help restore proper digestion and metabolism, thereby preventing further formation of *Ama*.

- In *Vicharchika* management, *Katu Vipaka* is considered useful because it counteracts the dominant *Kapha* and *Kleda* components involved in the disease. *Katu vipaka* helps to reduce *Kleda, pacifying kapha, Deepana-pachan* action, *lekhan* effect and *srotoshodhan*.

- Doshaghanta- Visa bilwadi agad* has 18% *Tridosha* drugs, 12% *kaphapittahara*, 1% *kaphavatahara*.

While considering 17 drugs with its *Rasa*(chart-1), *Guna*(chart-2), *Veerya*(chart-3), *Vipaka* (chart-4), *Doshaghanta*(chart-5) come to know that all of the drugs of *Visabilwadi agad* helps in management of *Vicharchika*.

CONCLUSION-

In conclusion, *Visabilwadi Agad* demonstrates significant potential in the Ayurvedic management of *Vicharchika*. Its multifaceted properties *Kandughna* (anti-pruritic), *Sophahara* (anti-inflammatory), *Raktashodhak* (blood purifier), and *Stambhana* (astringent) directly address the symptoms of itching, oozing, and chronic inflammation. By pacifying aggravated *Kapha* and *Pitta doshas* and supporting detoxification, the formulation not only provides symptomatic relief but also contributes to breaking the cycle of recurrence that characterizes chronic skin disorders. Thus, *Visabilwadi Agad* represents a promising adjunct in the treatment of *Vicharchika* (Seborrheic dermatitis).

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