



INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

धातुस्नेहपरम्परा WSR To interlink between Mental Health and Gut Health

Author:

Dr.Bishnupriya Mohanty.

MD, PhD.

Professor and HOD.

Department of Sanskrit Samhita and Siddhanta.

Gomantak Aurveda Mahavidyalaya and Research Centre, Shiroda, Goa

Co-author:

1. Tanvi Tulshidas Velingkar.

Final B.A.M.S.

Gomantak Aurveda Mahavidyalaya and Research Centre, Shiroda, Goa

2. Prof(Dr) Sangram Keshari Das.

Professor & Head, Dept. of Dravyaguna Vijnana, Gomantak Ayurveda Mahavidyalaya & Research Centre, At/Po- Shiroda, Dist- North Goa, Goa, India-403103.

Abstract:

The interaction between mental health and digestive health has been increasingly recognized in both Ayurveda and modern medicine. The gastrointestinal tract and the brain communicate through a complex bidirectional system known as the gut-brain axis, involving neural, hormonal, immune and microbial pathways. Emotional states such as stress, anxiety, anger and excessive thinking can significantly influence digestive processes and may lead to various gastrointestinal disturbances.

Ayurveda explains this relationship through the concepts of Manas (mind), Agni (digestive fire), Dosha balance and Ama (toxic metabolic by-products). Disturbance of the mind can impair Agni, leading to improper digestion and accumulation of Ama which further contributes to digestive disorders. Modern science similarly explains this through gut microbiota imbalance, neurotransmitters like serotonin and neural communication through the vagus nerve.

The present cross-sectional survey was conducted among 104 participants using a structured questionnaire to evaluate the association between mental health factors and digestive complaints. The results indicated that psychological stress and emotional disturbances are frequently associated with gastrointestinal symptoms. The findings support the concept that maintaining mental balance along with healthy dietary and lifestyle practices is essential for optimal gut health.

Introduction:

Health includes both physical and mental well-being. Digestive health is greatly influenced by mental state. In Ayurveda, disturbed Manas affects Agni leading to Ama formation and digestive disorders. Modern medicine describes this through neural and hormonal pathways of the gut–brain axis. Increasing stress and lifestyle changes have made digestive complaints common, hence this study was undertaken.

Objectives:

1. To assess gut-related symptoms.
2. To assess mental health factors.
3. To study mind–gut association.
4. To evaluate coping mechanisms.

Materials and Methods:

A cross-sectional survey was conducted among 104 participants using a structured questionnaire including mental symptoms, digestive complaints and lifestyle factors. Data were analyzed using frequency and percentage.

Results:

Emotional stress, anxiety and overthinking were widely reported. Digestive complaints were common and often aggravated during emotional disturbance.

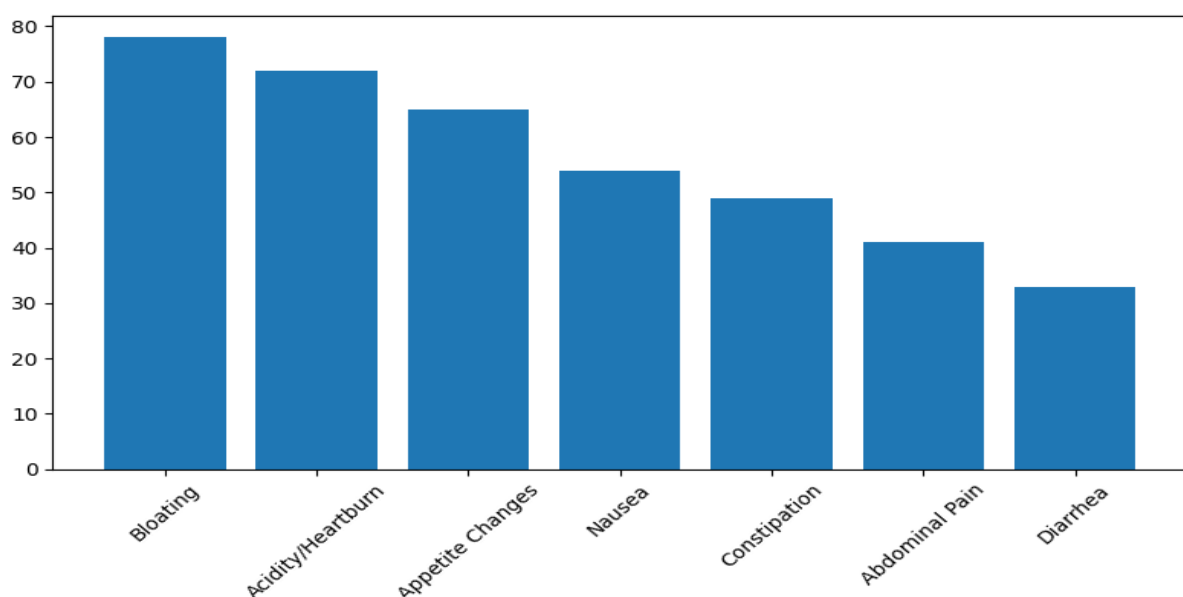


Figure 1: **Prevalence of Digestive Symptoms**

Digestive complaints were frequently reported among participants. Bloating and acidity appeared as the most common symptoms. These symptoms may indicate functional digestive disturbances which can arise from irregular diet, stress and impaired digestive activity. According to Ayurvedic understanding,

weakened Agni can lead to incomplete digestion and formation of Ama, resulting in symptoms such as heaviness, bloating and acidity.

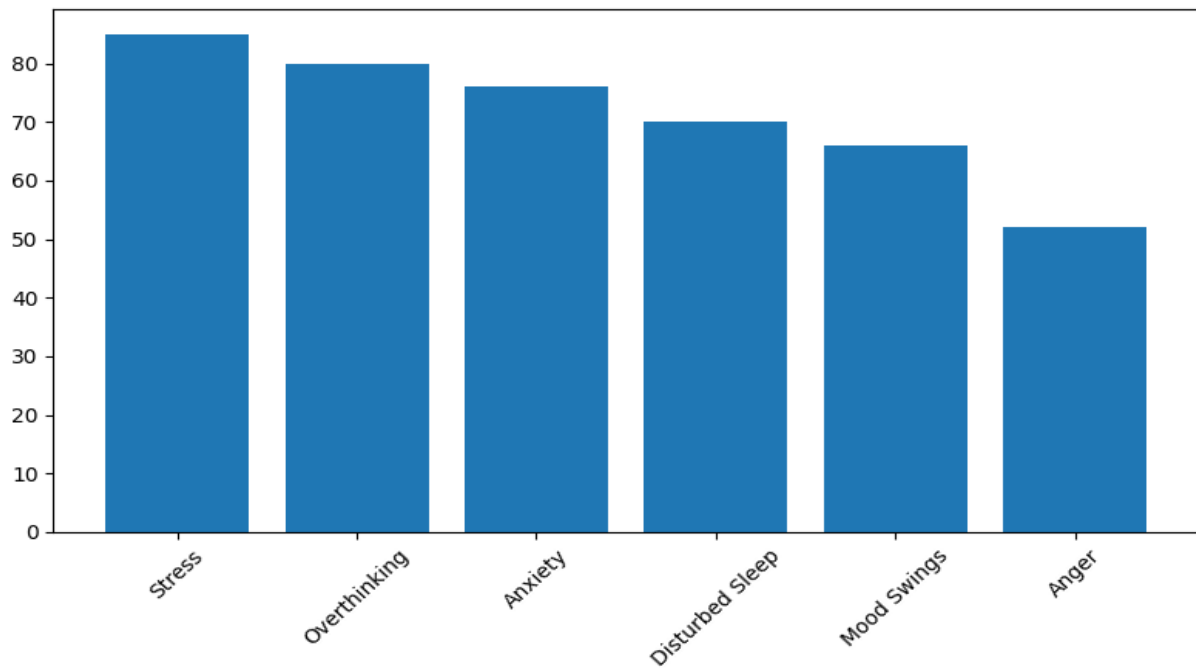


Figure 2: Frequency of Mental Health Factors

Stress and overthinking were the most commonly observed psychological factors among participants. Emotional tension and anxiety were also present in several individuals. Persistent mental stress can influence the gut-brain axis and alter digestive processes through neural and hormonal pathways. In Ayurvedic perspective, disturbed mental state can aggravate Vata and Pitta doshas which may further disturb digestive balance.

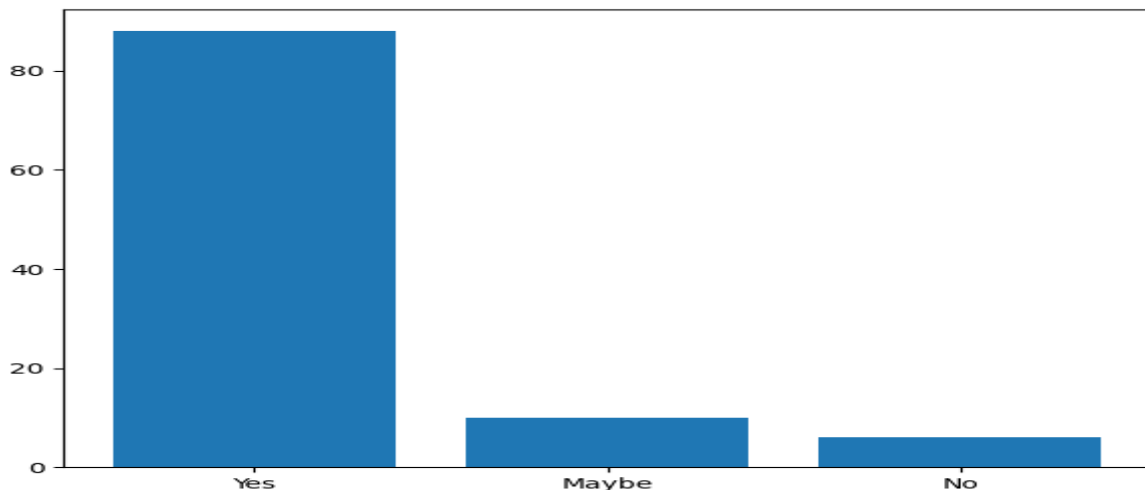


Figure 3: Emotional Impact on Digestion

A large number of participants reported that their digestive symptoms worsen during periods of emotional disturbance. This finding highlights the functional relationship between the mind and digestive system. Scientific studies suggest that stress can affect gut motility, intestinal permeability and microbial balance. Ayurveda explains this phenomenon as disturbance of Agni caused by mental imbalance.

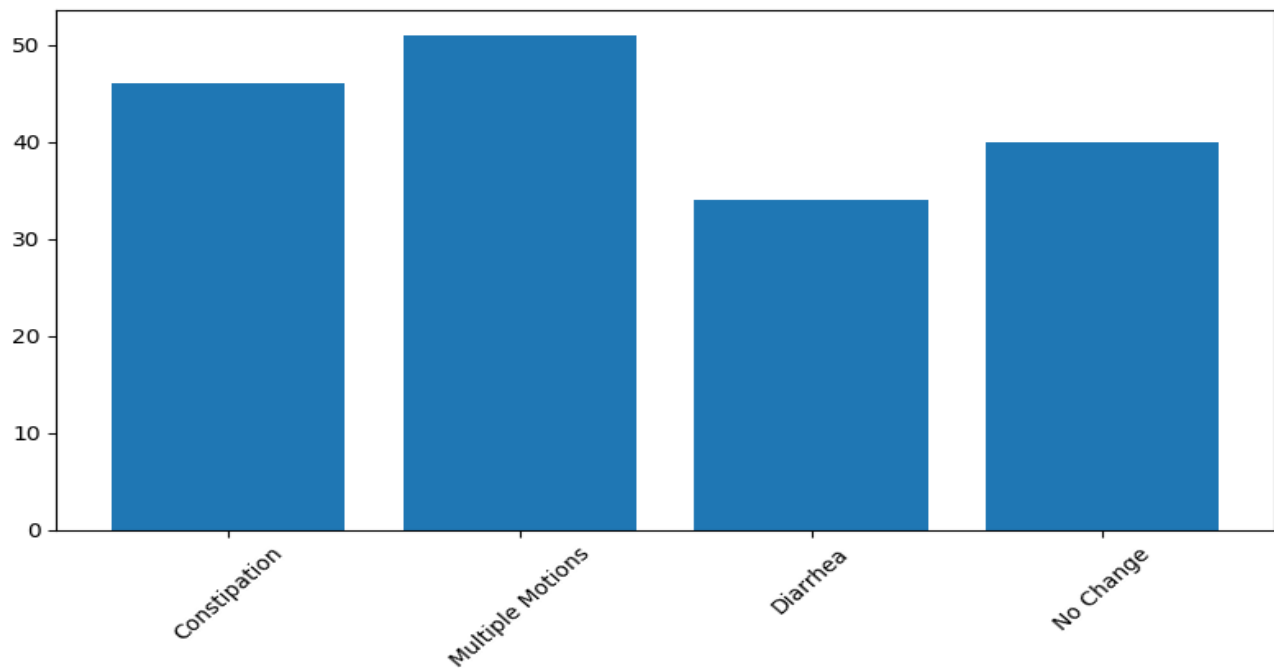


Figure 4: Bowel Habit Changes Under Stress.

Participants also reported noticeable changes in bowel habits during stressful situations. Some individuals experienced constipation while others reported increased bowel frequency. Stress can influence intestinal motility through the gut–brain axis. From an Ayurvedic viewpoint, aggravated Vata dosha during stress may disturb the normal function of Apana Vata leading to irregular bowel movements.

Discussion:

The findings of the present study demonstrate a significant association between mental health factors and digestive symptoms. Both Ayurvedic literature and modern medical research emphasize the interconnected functioning of the mind and gastrointestinal system through the gut–brain axis.

Modern research highlights the role of gut microbiota, neurotransmitters such as serotonin and neural communication through the vagus nerve in regulating digestion and emotional responses. Disturbance in gut microbial balance can lead to inflammation and altered signaling between the gut and brain.

Similarly, Ayurveda describes this connection through the interaction of Manas, Agni, Doshas and Ama. Emotional disturbances may impair Agni leading to improper digestion and accumulation of metabolic toxins, which can further aggravate digestive symptoms.

Therefore, maintaining mental balance along with proper dietary habits and lifestyle practices is essential for preserving digestive health.

Conclusion:

The study indicates a clear relationship between mental health and gut health. Emotional stress and psychological disturbances can influence digestive function and contribute to gastrointestinal symptoms. Both Ayurvedic principles and modern scientific understanding support the concept of a strong gut–brain connection. Adopting holistic approaches including stress management, balanced diet and healthy lifestyle may help maintain both mental wellbeing and digestive health.

References:

1. Charaka Samhita; Sushruta Samhita; Ashtanga Hridaya; Mayer EA – Gut Brain Axis; Cryan JF – Microbiota & Brain.
2. Tripathi B, Agnivesha. Charaka Samhita - Revised by Charaka and Dridhabala with Ayurveda Deepika commentary of Chakrapani Datta, 3rd ed. Varanasi: Chaukhambha Surabharati Prakashan; 1992.
3. Harshmohan. Text book of Pathology, 4th ed. reprint 2002. New Delhi: Jay Pee brothers Medicdal Publishers (P) Ltd; 2002.
4. Sharma P.V, Chakrapanidatta. Chakradatta- edited & translated in English, 3rd ed. Varanasi: Choukhambha Publishers; 1983.
5. Novais F, Capela J, Machado S, Murillo-Rodriguez E, Telles-Correia D (2021) Does dysbiosis increase the risk of developing schizophrenia?-A comprehensive narrative review. Curr Top Med Chem 21:976–984.
6. Forsythe P (2013) Gut microbes as modulators of the neuro-immuno-endocrine system. PharmaNutrition 1:115–122.

