AN INNOVATIVE TEACHING TECHNIQUE IN RECITATION OF SHLOKAS OF SAMHITA (ASHTANGA HRIDAYA) FOR FIRST B.A.M.S. STUDENTS

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ABSTRACT

Sanskrit *shlokas* (verses) that compress deep meaning in few words are an integral part of *Ayurveda*. Students need to study these verses of Samhita to understand the subject, perform better in examinations and apply the knowledge gained in practice of Ayurveda to treat patients. 1st year BAMS students who rarely study Sanskrit in school find it difficult to learn such advanced level Sanskrit verses. Memorizing a large number of verses may be very difficult for many students who do not understand Sanskrit grammar. This project is based on the idea of using an audio method to teach Sanskrit verses as a tool to enable recitation and memorization. The verses from the first chapter of *AshtangaHridaya sutrasthana – Ayushkamiya Adhyaya* were selected and 30 Students from 1st year BAMS participated in the study. They were given equal number of verses and equal length of time to learn them by traditional method and by Audio method. By keeping all the other variables constant except the learning method, this study compared effectiveness of traditional and audio-based learning methods. Upon detailed statistical analysis of the results presented in this paper, it was found that overall more number of students were able to recall more number of *shlokas* more effectively using the Audio method.

Keywords: *AshtangaHridaya*, Ayurveda, *Samhita, shlokas*, verses

INTRODUCTION

AshtangaHridaya is the third major treatise on Ayurveda. It was written by Vagbhata during 6th century. *AshtangaHridaya* is written in Sanskrit in the form of simple and easily understandable poetic verses. It is divided into 6 sections i.e. *sutrasthana, nidanasthana, sharirsthana, chikitsasthana, kalpasthan,* and *uttarasthana*. It has a total of 120 chapters containing about 8000 verses. *AshtangaHridaya* Sutrasthana is one of the subjects for 1st year

BAMS students that contain 30 chapters. It covers all the chief fundamental principles of Ayurveda and subject matter is arranged very systematically.

First chapter of *sutrasthan* is *AyushkamiyaAdhaya* which deals with almost all fundamental principles of Ayurveda. This chapter briefly explains in the entire *sutrasthana*.

Context of the study

In Ayurveda, students have to study the Sanskrit verses from *Samhita* to understand the subject. Every single subject finds various such verses in *Samhita* related to the contents of the subject. The verse i.e. *shlok* compresses in formulaic manner a large and deep meaning into very few words. From examination point of view also, students have more chance to attain higher score if they can quote relevant verses while answering questions. To understand, interpret and apply the basic concepts of Ayurveda; learning *shlokas* is very important. If *shlokas* are learnt thoroughly, they are beneficial in clinical practice too.

Newly admitted 1st BAMS students find it difficult to go through the Sanskrit text and learn, especially when they join the course after passing 12th science which is taught in English medium. Memorizing a number of Sanskrit verses may be very difficult and boring for many students. While learning the *shlokas*, there correct pronunciation and *sandhi vigrah* is also important.

In this project, Audios of *shlokas* were selected as a tool to enable *shloka* recitation and memorizing. The *shlokas* of "*Ayushka-miyaAdhyaya*', the first chapter of *Ashtanga-Hridaya sutrasthana* is selected.

Materials and methods:

1. 30 students willing to participate in project from 1'st year B.A.M.S batch of M.S. Ayurved College, Gondia are selected and their written consent is taken.

2. Selected topic '*Ayushkamiya Adhyaya*' was taught.

3. The *Shlokas* of "*Ayushkamiya Adhyaya*" are divided into 2 sections (10+10).1'st section of *shlokas* recited by traditional way and 2'nd section by Innovative way as per this project.

4. First 10 *shlokas* were recited in traditional way. 10 days were given for learning then oral exam of student was taken.

5. Other 10 *shlokas* were recited by using audio of *shlokas*. After 10 days, oral examination was administered to all 30 students.

6. Recitation tool: Authentic Audio CD of Dr. Dilip Gadgil on *Ashtang Hridaya* was used as a tool for recitation of *shlokas*.

Evaluation:

1. Oral exam of students for each method was taken. It is based on total number of *shlokas* learnt, pronunciations and *Sandhi vigrah.*

2. Feedback from students to know their experience and opinion about this Innovative method and effectiveness was taken.

3. The results were compared with for both types of *shlokas* recitation methods for same set of students.

4. Analysis done by applying the appropriate statistical tests of significance.

Observation and Results:

A. Method:

Table 1: Showing number of *shlokas* learned by students:

No of *shlokas*	Traditional Method		Audio Method	
	No of student	Percentage	No of student	Percentage
10 shlok	00	00.00	04	13.33
9 shlok	06	20.00	07	23.33
8 shlok	03	10.00	06	20.00
7 shlok	06	20.00	06	20.00
6 shlok	04	13.33	04	13.33
5 shlok	06	20.00	02	06.67
< 5 shlok	05	16.67	01	03.33

In this study all data were collected and feedback forms were taken from all students and analyzed as following.

It was observed that by traditional method 6 students could remember 9 *shlokas* of *Ashtanga Hridaya*, while 03 students remembered 8 shlokas, while 17 students could recite more than 8 *shlokas* by audio method.

Next 16 students were performed better for 5 to 7 *shlokas* by traditional method while same number of students also recited the *shlokas* by audio method. However, by traditional methods 5 students recalled less than 5 *shlokas* but by audio method there was only one student.

Over all, more students could recall more number of *shlokas* by the audio method than that of traditional method.

Graph 1: Showing number of *shlokas* learned by students:
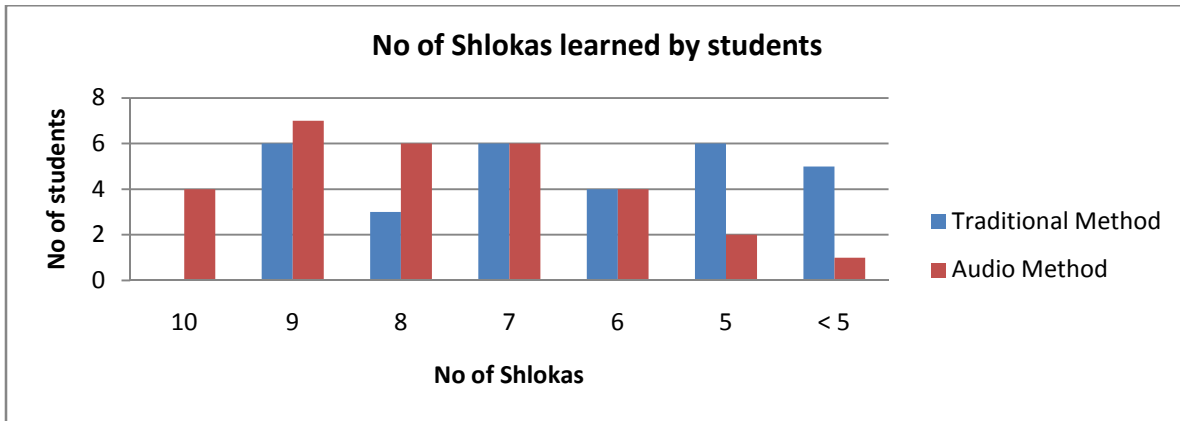
Statistical analysis:
The median is different from traditional method and audio method as p value obtained is 0.0036 which is considered very significant (p < 0.05).

Sum of all signed ranks (W) = -167

Sum of positive ranks (T+) = 32
Sum of negative ranks (T-) = -199
No of pairs= 21
Statistically it was also observed that p value obtained was <0.05 which is considered very significant and which shows that there is significant difference in observations between two methods.

Table 2: Showing Pronunciation learned by students:

No of *shlokas*	Traditional Method		Audio Method	
	No of student	Percentage	No of student	Percentage
Clear	13	43.33	24	80.00
Not Clear	17	56.67	06	20.00

It was observed that in traditional method 13 (43.33%) students could pronounce *shlokas* clearly while 17 (56.67%) were not clear in pronunciation.
By Audio method 24 (80%) could performed clear pronunciation of *shlokas* and only 06 (20%) were not cleared performed.
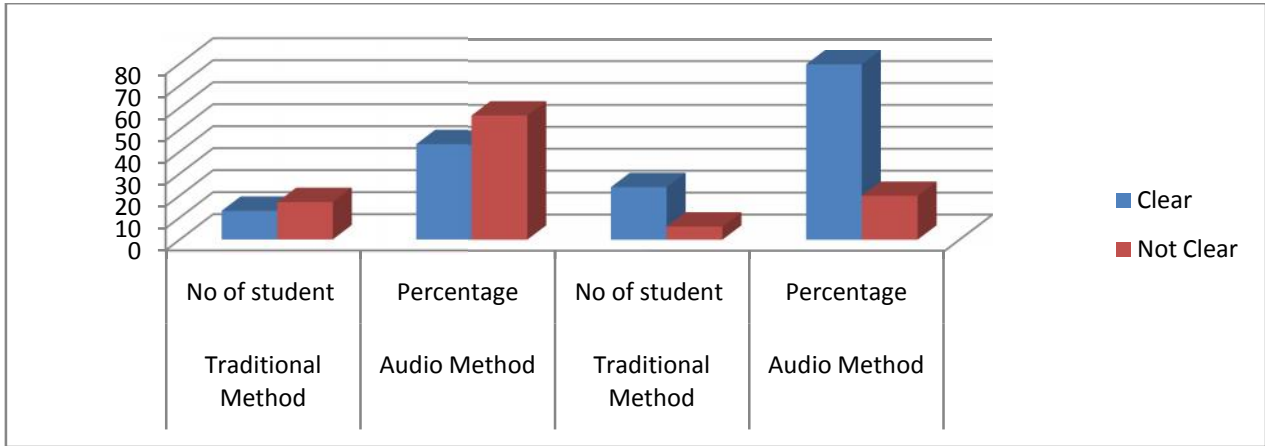
Chi square test:
Two sided p value obtained is 0.0079 very significant. (p< 0.05)
Chi square statistics with Yates correction is 7.051 at df =1
Results: The row/column association is statistically significant.

Graph 2: Showing Pronunciation learned by students:

Table 3: Showing *Sandhi vigrah* method learned by students:

No of *shlokas*	Traditional Method		Audio Method	
	No of student	Percentage	No of student	Percentage
Properly done	17	56.67	27	90.00
Not properly done	13	43.33	03	10.00

It was observed that in traditional method 17 (56.67%) students were able to execute perfect *Sandhivigrah* of *shlokas* and 13 (43.33%) were not able to perform properly *sandhivigrah* of *shlokas*. However by means of Audio method 27 (90%) were able to perform perfect *sandhivigrah* of *shlokas* and only 03 (10%) were not cleared performed *sandhivigrah* of *shlokas*.

So it can be concluded that more number of student had performed better *sandhivigrah* of *shlokas* by the way of audio method.
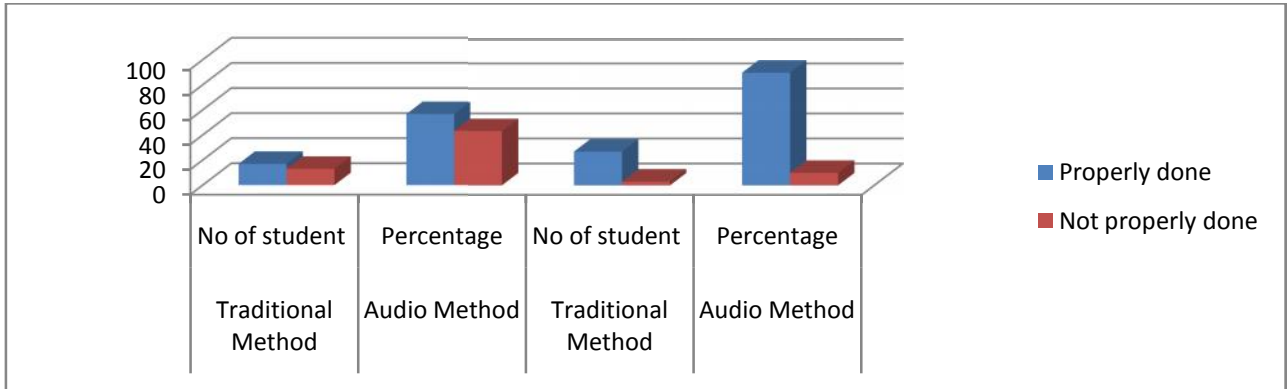
Chi square test:
Two sided p value obtained is 0.0086 very significant. (p < 0.05)
Chi square statistics with Yates correction is 6.903 at df =1
The row/column association is statistically significant.

Graph 3: Showing *Sandhi vigrah* method learned by students**:**

B. Feedback from students:
1. How will you rate Traditional Recitation of shlokas on the statements given below?

No	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
1	Helps you learn *shlokas* easily	02 (6.67%)	05 (16.67%)	13 (43.33%)	10 (33.33%)	00
2	Helps you more to recall *shlokas*	02 (6.67%)	04 (13.33%)	06 (20%)	18 (60%)	00
3	You would prefer this method to be taught in future	01 (3.33%)	02 (6.67%)	12 (40%)	14 (46.67%)	01 (3.33%)
4	Helps you in recitation *shlokas* in oral exam	01 (3.33%)	06 (20%)	10 (33.33%)	13 (43.33%)	00
5	You will recommend this method to others	00	03 (10%)	11 (36.67%)	16 (53.33%)	00
	Total	06(04%)	20(13.33%)	52(34.66%)	71(47.33%)	01(0.67%)

It was observed that feedback obtained in Traditional Recitation of *shlokas* on the statements the response of students in average for Strongly agree was 06(04%), for the response agree it was 20(13.33%), for Neither agree nor disagree it was 52 (34.66%), in response for disagree it was 71(47.33%) and strongly disagree was 01(0.67%)

2. How will you rate audio method of recitation shlokas on statements given below?

No	Statement	5	4	3	2	1
1	Helps you learn *shlokas* easily	08(26.67%)	21(70%)	1(3.33%)	00	00
2	Helps you more to recall *shlokas*	10(33.33%)	19(63.33%)	1(3.33%)	00	00
3	You would prefer this method to be taught in future	9(30%)	17(56.67%)	4(13.33%)	00	00
4	Helps you in recitation *shlokas* in oral exam	8(26.67%)	15(50%)	7(23.33%)	00	00
5	You will recommend this methods to others	8(26.67%)	19(63.33%)	3(10%)	00	00
	Total	43(28.67%)	91(60.67%)	16(10.67%)	00	00

It was observed that feedback obtained in Audio method of Recitation of *shlokas* on the statements the response of students in average for Strongly agree was 43 (28.67%), for the response agree it was 91(60.67%), for Neither agree nor disagree it was 16 (10.67%), in response for disagree and strongly disagree there was 0 %.

Graph 4: Showing the response on statements towards the method:
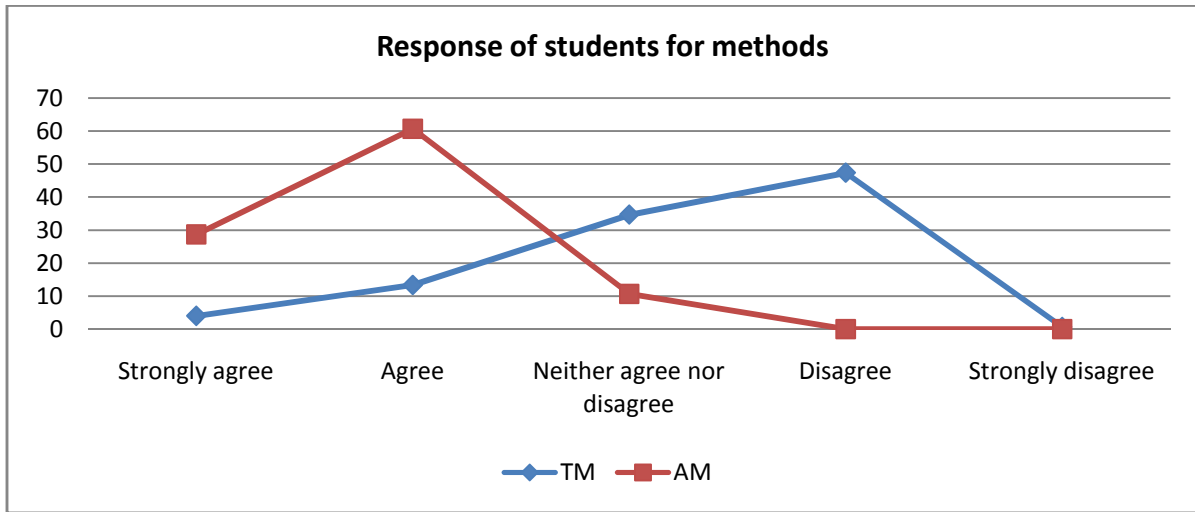
It was seen in above graph for the feedback obtained from the student against the traditional method slope of graph tends towards neither agree nor disagree from disagree. It reduced towards the strongly agree side.

It was seen from above graph for the feedback obtained from the student against the method

of recitation of *Shlokas* in Audio method slope of graph tends towards the strongly agree as well as agree. It reduced towards the strongly disagree side.

From above observation, it can be concluded that more number of students were agree and most of student were strongly agree on Audio method for the recitation of *Shlokas*. While in traditional method many responses were neither agree nor disagree and most of responses were disagreeing in nature.

CONCLUSION

Study shows that Audio method enhances learning process and improves recall capacity of the students for the *shlokas* of *Ashtanga Hridaya*. Audio method of learning *shlokas* helps in generating interest in reciting *shlokas* among students, which otherwise is a difficult task. It's an easy method with stress less environment for recalling *shlokas*. Student feedback also suggests it was very good method to recite *shlokas*.

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