



Vedic Astrology: A Critical Analysis of Nine Plants of Navagraha

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Abstract-

Vedic Astrology is the traditional *Hindu* system of astrology. It is one of the six auxiliary disciplines in *Hinduism* that is connected with the study of the *Vedas*. The term *Jyotisha* includes the study of astronomy, astrology and the science of timekeeping using the movements of astronomical bodies. It aimed to keep time, maintain calendars, and predict auspicious times for *Vedic* rituals¹. *Navagraha* are the nine celestial bodies used in *Hindu* astrology. In *Hindu* Astrology, the nine Planets/*Grahas* are Sun, Moon, Mars, Mercury, Jupiter, Venus and Saturn, *Rahu* and *Ketu*. Amongst them *Rahu* and *Ketu* are astronomical points where the Moons orbit intersects the apparent path of the Sun around the earth. Astrology suggests these *Rahu* and *Ketu* as *chhaya graha*. These nine planets/*grahas* are not only directly related to individual's lives but also exerts effects on ecology². Life on earth is believed to be affected by the cosmic energies of the *navagraha* or nine planets. There are nine plants narrated for each planet/*graha* of *navagraha*. In the universe, the *grahas* are responsible for maintaining overall equilibrium. These *grahas* have their energy, qualities and are said to affect each of us throughout our lives. Every plant included in *navagraha* are specially chosen to influence one's energy field³. The *Vedas* explain that these herbs are not only sacred in nature but also possess medicinal properties. Also, these included herbs remove toxins and refresh the human body. The plants included are *apamarga* (*Achyranthes aspera*) for *Budha*, *Udumbara* (*Ficus racemosa*) for *Shukra*, *Palasha* (*Butea monosperma*) for *Moon*, *Peepal* (*Ficus religiosa*) for *Guru*, *Khadira* (*Acacia catechu*) for *Mars*, *Arka* (*Calotropis procera*) for *Sun*, *Darbha* (*Imperata cylindrica*) for *Ketu*⁴. The present study aims to rationalize nine herbs/ plants in perspective of *navagraha* for spiritual growth.

Keywords- *Vedic Astrology, Jyotisha, Navagraha, Astrology, Veda, Rituals*

Aims and Objectives-

- 1) To review literary data of *navagraha*.
- 2) To analyze effect of *navagraha* on human health.
- 3) To enlist and review properties and uses of nine planets.
- 4) To rationalize relationship between planets of *navagraha* with properties of plants.

Introduction -

Vedic astrology, the system of predicting one's destiny based on the position of the stars and planets, is as timeless as ancient India. Originating from the *Vedas*, a collection of sacred Hindu texts, astrology is still prevalent today. Many Hindus consult with an astrologer before pursuing any major life endeavor, or when they are experiencing particular hardship⁵. Besides explaining to people what their general nature and destiny encompasses, a *Vedic* astrologer will often recommend certain remedial measures that can be enacted to help minimize the effects of foreseen negative circumstances⁶. Amongst other things, these measures usually center around performing *puja*/worship to a particular planet. Hindus in the 21st century would actually take seriously the idea of worshipping planets to better their life's situation. Thus, it's essential to understand how the planets are viewed from a *Vedic* and astrological perspective. Dawid Frawley wrote "Each planet in its orbit gathers in and gives out forces, and thereby transmits a particular wavelength of energy necessary for maintaining the order of the solar system. The planets are perpetually flashing forth with energy in different patterns and cycles of transmission weaving the web of life and creation." This energy determines the quality of the time phases in

which we live. Therefore, planets are described as *grahas*, because of the way they take hold of and influence one’s life and health.

In *navagraha*, *nava* meaning nine (9) which includes the Sun (*Surya*), Moon (*Chandra*), Mars (*Mangala*), Mercury (*Budha*), Jupiter (*Brihaspati*), Venus (*Shukra*), Saturn (*Shani*), Rahu (north node of the moon), and Ketu (south node of the moon). According to the Vedas, each *graha* represents a particular aspect of life, and each is under the jurisdiction of a particular deity⁷. Life is ultimately meant for spiritual growth. This growth is enabled by *karma*, the *Hindu* concept that every thought and action has a corresponding reaction. The deities of the *navagrahas* are in charge of delivering us these lessons, and therefore play an integral role in helping to facilitate our spiritual development⁸. A person, therefore, should not view hardships merely as hurdles on the path of hedonistic pursuit. Life’s obstacles should be seen as opportunities for gaining spiritual maturity, and the deities of *grahas* should be approached as revered teachers of these lessons.

Material and Methods-

In Vedic Astrology, the *navagraha* are some of the major markers that point out the *karmic* influence on the behavior of the living beings.

Table No. 1- *Graha/Planets of navagraha*⁹

Sr.No.	<i>Graha/Planet</i>	Gender	Element
1	<i>Surya</i> (Sun)	Male	<i>Agni</i> (Fire)
2	<i>Chandra</i> (Moon)	Female	<i>Jala</i> (Water)
3	<i>Mangal</i> (Mars)	Male	<i>Agni</i> (Fire)
4	<i>Budh</i> (Mercury)	Neutral	<i>Bhumi</i> (Earth)
5	<i>Guru</i> (Jupiter)	Male	<i>Akasha</i> (Ether)
6	<i>Shukra</i> (Venus)	Female	<i>Jala</i> (Water)
7	<i>Shani</i> (Saturn)	Neutral	<i>Vaayu</i> (Air)
8	<i>Rahu</i> (ascending lunar node)	Female	<i>Vaayu</i> (Air)
9	<i>Ketu</i> (descending lunar node)	Neutral	<i>Agni</i> (Fire)

Fig. No. 1

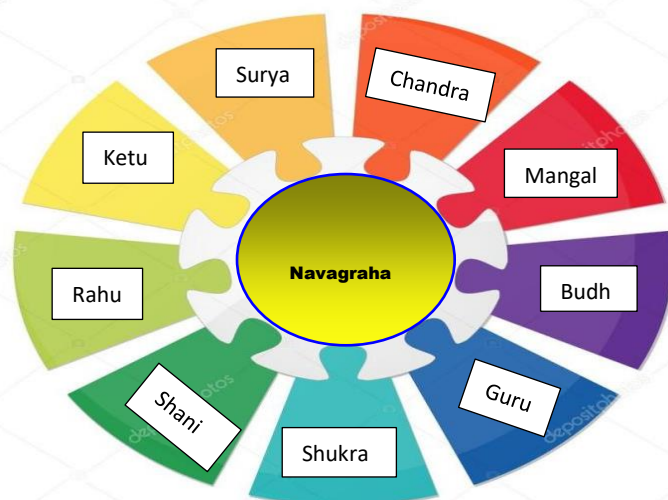


Table No. 2- Planets of *navagraha* and effect on Human health¹⁰⁻¹²

Sr.No.	<i>Graha/Planet</i>	Characteristics
1	<i>Surya</i> (Sun)	The Sun is considered the king of the <i>navagraha</i> . It represents confidence, self-esteem, and vitality. Its positioning in the birth chart determines the strength of these qualities in an individual. A well-placed Sun can bestow leadership abilities, success, and recognition. However, a weak or afflicted Sun may lead to a lack of self-confidence and difficulty asserting oneself.
2	<i>Chandra</i> (Moon)	The Moon governs our emotions, instincts, and intuition. It symbolizes our subconscious mind and influences our emotional well-being. A strong Moon in the birth chart can contribute to emotional stability, empathy, and intuition.

		On the other hand, a weak or afflicted Moon may lead to mood swings, emotional turmoil, and inner unrest.
3	<i>Mangal</i> (Mars)	Mars is the planet of energy, action, and courage. It represents our drive, ambition, and physical strength. A well-positioned Mars in the birth chart can grant assertiveness, determination, and the ability to overcome challenges. However, a negatively influenced Mars can lead to aggression, impulsiveness, and conflicts.
4	<i>Budh</i> (Mercury)	Mercury governs communication, intellect, and analytical abilities. It influences our thinking patterns, learning capacity, and expression of ideas. A strong Mercury in the birth chart enhances communication skills, intelligence, and adaptability. Conversely, a weak or afflicted Mercury may result in difficulties in expressing oneself, learning disabilities, and challenges in decision-making.
5	<i>Guru</i> (Jupiter)	Jupiter is associated with wisdom, knowledge, and spirituality. It signifies expansion, growth, and higher learning. A well-placed Jupiter in the birth chart can bestow wisdom, optimism, and a thirst for knowledge. It can also bring opportunities for success and abundance. However, a negatively influenced Jupiter can lead to over-indulgence, excessive optimism, or lack of direction.
6	<i>Shukra</i> (Venus)	Venus represents love, beauty, and relationships. It influences our romantic inclinations, artistic talents, and capacity to form harmonious connections. A strong Venus in the birth chart can bring love, romance, and a strong aesthetic sense. It can also contribute to artistic abilities and a harmonious social life. However, an afflicted Venus may lead to relationship issues, superficiality, or materialistic tendencies.
7	<i>Shani</i> (Saturn)	Saturn is associated with discipline, responsibility, and hard work. It symbolizes life lessons, <i>karma</i> , and endurance. A well-placed Saturn in the birth chart can bring discipline, perseverance, and the ability to overcome obstacles. It encourages practicality and a strong work ethic. However, a negatively influenced Saturn may lead to limitations, delays, or a pessimistic outlook on life.
8 & 9	<i>Rahu and Ketu</i>	<i>Rahu</i> and <i>Ketu</i> are known as shadow planets and represent karmic influences in <i>Vedic astrology</i> . They signify the desires and lessons from past lives. The positioning of <i>Rahu</i> and <i>Ketu</i> in the birth chart indicates the <i>karmic</i> path and challenges an individual may face. They can bring both positive and negative effects, depending on their alignment with other planets.

Table no. 3- Plants of *navagraha* and their *guna*/properties¹³

Sr.No.	Graha/Planet	Name of the plant	Guna /Properties of plants
1	<i>Surya</i> (Sun)	<i>Arka</i> (<i>Calotropis procera</i>)	<i>Laghu</i> (light), <i>ruksha</i> (dryness), <i>tiksna</i> (sharp), <i>usna</i> (hot)
2	<i>Chandra</i> (Moon)	<i>Palasha</i> (<i>Butea monosperma</i>)	<i>Laghu</i> (light), <i>snigdha</i> (unctuous)
3	<i>Mangal</i> (Mars)	<i>Khadira</i> (<i>Acacia catechu</i>)	<i>Laghu</i> (light), <i>ruksha</i> (dryness)
4	<i>Budh</i> (Mercury)	<i>Apamarga</i> (<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>)	<i>Laghu</i> (light), <i>ruksha</i> (dryness), <i>tiksna</i> (sharp)
5	<i>Guru</i>	<i>Peepal</i>	<i>Guru</i> (heavy), <i>ruksha</i> (dryness)

	(Jupiter)	(Ficus religiosa)	
6	<i>Shukra</i> (Venus)	<i>Udumbara</i> (Ficus racemosa)	<i>Guru</i> (heavy), <i>ruksha</i> (dryness)
7	<i>Shani</i> (Saturn)	<i>Shami</i> (Prosopis cineraria)	<i>Laghu</i> (light), <i>ruksha</i> (dryness)
8	<i>Rahu</i>	<i>Durva</i> (Cynodon dactylon)	<i>Laghu</i> (light)
9	<i>Ketu</i>	<i>Darbha</i> (Imperata cylindrica)	<i>Laghu</i> (light), <i>snigdha</i> (unctous)

Table No. 4- Medicinal properties of nine plants of *navagraha*

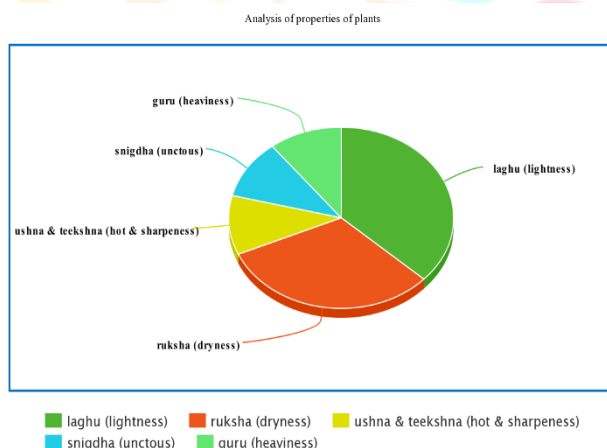
Sr.No.	Graha/Planet	Plant Name	Medicinal Properties
1	<i>Surya</i> (Sun)	<i>Arka</i> (Calotropis procera)	The milky juice is applied on wounds reduce itching and pain. It also acts as an antidote for scorpion venom. The root extract is used for urinary tract infections. The leaves are known to be an effective treatment for worms in children. The bark powder helps remove warts and corns from hands and feet ¹⁴ .
2	<i>Chandra</i> (Moon)	<i>Palasha</i> (Butea monosperma)	Flowers of the Bastard Teak have been used in beauty-care and to maintain complexion of skin. Seeds have been employed in the treatment of worm infestations ¹⁵ .
3	<i>Mangal</i> (Mars)	<i>Khadira</i> (Acacia catechu)	It is useful in dyspepsia, diarrhea, diabetes and respiratory problems. It is used to treat wounds or skin conditions ¹⁶ .
4	<i>Budh</i> (Mercury)	<i>Apamarga</i> (Achyranthes aspera)	The juice of the leaves is applied to get relief from fevers and arthritic pain. The leaves are taken internally to cure liver ailments and stomach ache. In Ayurveda and Unani medicine it is employed for skin diseases. As an external remedy, it is diuretic and purgative in nature ¹⁷ .
5	<i>Guru</i> (Jupiter)	<i>Peepal</i> (Ficus religiosa)	<i>Ficus religiosa</i> is used in traditional medicine for asthma, diabetes, diarrhea, epilepsy, gastric problems, inflammatory disorders, infectious and sexual disorders ¹⁸ .
6	<i>Shukra</i> (Venus)	<i>Udumbara</i> (Ficus racemosa)	The gular tree anti-inflammatory, antidiabetic, antioxidant, antiasthmatic, anti-ulcer, antipyretic and anti-diarrheal. It enhances overall immunity. The tree is useful in anaemia, metrorrhagia, leucorrhoea, dysentery, spermatorrhea and urinary disorders ¹⁹ .
7	<i>Shani</i> (Saturn)	<i>Shami</i> (Prosopis cineraria)	All parts of this plant is antidiabetic, anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial. Fresh leaf-juice mixed with lemon juice is used for dyspepsia. Extract of crushed pods is used in earache and toothache. The ash of bark is rubbed over the skin to remove hair. The flowers are mixed with sugar and administered to prevent miscarriage. The smoke of the leaves is a good remedy for ailments of the eye. The immature and

			mature pods are energy rich edible and have high nutritional values ²⁰ .
8	<i>Rahu</i>	<i>Durva</i> (<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>)	It treats acidity, boost immunity, controls sugar, cures polycystic ovarian syndrome and resolves menstrual problems. It also cures constipation, treats obesity, cures bleeding of gums, effective in eye infection and is helpful in nose bleeding ²¹ .
9	<i>Ketu</i>	<i>Darbha</i> (<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>)	Roots are indicated in gonorrhoea, asthma, jaundice, vaginal discharges, menorrhagia and vesicle calculi. Culms are considered as diuretic. It is febrifuge and is effective in hemorrhages, wounds, hematuria, oedema, jaundice and digestive disorders ²² .

Results and Observation-

On reviewing classical properties of plants of *navagraha*, it has been assessed that major basic *guna*/properties which balances our universe and affect our human health viz; *ushna* and *sheeta* (hot and cold), *snigdha* and *ruksha* (unctuous and dryness) and *laghu* and *guru* (lightness and heaviness) all are present in these nine plants of *navagraha*²³. This implies the uniqueness of balancing equilibrium of basic *guna*/properties in not only universe but also in one’s health.

Fig. No.2



Moreover, the classical data on effect of nine planets on human health implies overall basic characters of an individual which commonly reflects one’s character. The key effects ranges from confidence, intelligence, wisdom, relationships, discipline to their natural working culture based on their past lives²⁴.

Sr.No.	Graha/Planet	Key Effects on Human Health
1	<i>Surya</i> (Sun)	Influence on confidence and vitality.
2	<i>Chandra</i> (Moon)	Impact on emotions and intuition
3	<i>Mangal</i> (Mars)	Effects on courage and energy
4	<i>Budh</i> (Mercury)	Influence on communication and intelligence
5	<i>Guru</i> (Jupiter)	Impact on wisdom and knowledge
6	<i>Shukra</i> (Venus)	Effects on love and relationships
7	<i>Shani</i> (Saturn)	Influence on discipline and responsibility
8 & 9	<i>Rahu</i> and <i>Ketu</i>	<i>Karmic</i> influences

Also, the nine medicinal plants narrated for *navagraha* possess therapeutic potential to combat systemic health issues in humans. Among medicinal herbs included, Ark (*Calotropis procera*) and *Khadira* (*Acacia catechu*) specified for *Surya* and *Mangal graha* respectively are used in urinary tract infections, poisonous affections, pain management and respiratory disorders. *Palash* (*Butea monosperma*) which is plant narrated for *Chandra* (Moon) *graha* is beneficial in beauty care and cosmetology. For planet *Budh* (Mercury), narrated *apamarga* (*Achyranthes aspera*) plant is found to be useful in not only in liver and gut ailments but also cures respiratory disorders²⁵. *Peepal* (*Ficus religiosa*), a medicinal plant for *Guru* (Jupiter) is specially beneficial for mental disorders. For *Shukra* (Venus) *graha*, specified medicinal plant viz; *Udumbara* (*Ficus racemosa*) is used in the disorders of *shukra dhatu* viz; spermatorrhea and possess aphrodisiac property and moreover, is useful in metrorrhagia and leucorrhoea in women. For *Shani* (Saturn) *graha*, specified *Shani* (*Prosopis cineraria*) plant possess anti diabetic property and is useful in miscarriages in women and is beneficial for overall nutrition.

Durva (*Cynodon dactylon*) and *Darbha* (*Imperata cylindrica*), especially grasses, narrated for *Rahu* and *Ketu*, are therapeutically useful in bleeding disorders as possesses hemostatic property²⁶.

Discussion and Conclusion-

The *Graha*/planets, are not only planets hanging in the space but are an integral part of the administration of Natural Law, which governs the whole universe viz; *Surya*, the Sun, represents consciousness; *Chandra*, the Moon, represents the cosmic mind; *Budh*, the planet Mercury, the cosmic intellect; etc²⁷. The meaning of the word *Nava* is nine and *Graha* is a planet or a governing, grasping or knowing authority. The word *Graha* comprises all these connotations. These nine planets (*navagraha*) are worshiped for better fortune and to eradicate the bad fortune.

Every plant is specially chosen in vagrant influences one's energy field. The present work encompasses traditional uses and the therapeutic potential of nine sacred plants of *navagraha*²⁸. The relevant information regarding *navagraha* and specified plants was collected and their therapeutic potential is reviewed. Moreover, phyto-medicinal research has seen a significant surge in global scenario. *Navagraha* (nine planets) and narrated medicinal plants are always lust for research avenues due to their economical and therapeutic potential²⁹. Major objective of study is to draw an attention to their conservation and cultivation as some medicinal plants are on verge of extinction. Secondly and lastly, the creation of novel therapeutic compounds from these medicinal plants should be fostered through research aiming towards health and wellness of human being³⁰.

Figure No.3-



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