

Shodasha Sanskara: A Research-Oriented Review of Scientific Aspects and Opportunities for AI

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Abstract—Background: Shodasha Sanskara (the sixteen life-cycle rites) structure key developmental milestones within many Hindu lineages, drawing on Vedic – Smṛti sources (e.g., Gṛhya Sutras, Manusmṛti) and regional praxis. **Aims:** Outline how modern AI may document, analyze, and ethically supplement knowledge and practice; map potential scientific mechanisms, psychological, physiological, social, and ecological underpinnings of selected Sanskara; and suggest study strategies and datasets to get from hypothesis to evidence. **Methods:** Conceptual synthesis that combines traditional explanations with scientifically proven mechanisms from public health, behavioral medicine, developmental psychology, acoustics, and ritual studies; translational suggestions for AI in voice, vision, NLP, and knowledge graphs. **Results:** Structured social support, prosocial identity construction, attention management, prosody breath coupling, sanitary micro-practices, and food ecology are all plausible mediators that are involved in a number of Sanskara. AI can power mixed-methods trials with multimodal sensing, standardize ritual process models, enable speech-prosody feedback for mantra pedagogy, and speed up philology (OCR/HTR). **Conclusion:** It is possible to have a culturally aware agenda with a scientific foundation. Open datasets and carefully planned, low-risk research can help identify which effects are universal, which are tradition-specific, and where AI can be useful without undermining context.

Index Terms—Ayurveda, Shodasha Sanskara, Hindu rites of passage, ritual science, speech technology, AI.

I. INTRODUCTION

Hinduism views all aspects of life as sacred, hence special rituals are performed to commemorate each

important moment, from conception to anteyeshti (death cremation). The purpose of the Sanskara is to promote the spiritual, social, and physical development of the individual. The vaidya's recitation of mantras and worship of the gods constitute the sacrament, according to Ayurvedic texts. The sacraments occur during important events and give a person's life meaning. One The name Samskar comes from the basic words "Kri" and "Sam" Upasarga, or religious practices. The phrase "Samskaro Hi Gunantaradhanam" describes the process of improving quality by incorporating specific qualities. Sanskara are a person's life's rite of passage, according to our science. They cover significant cultural occurrences in a person's life from conception to demise. Approximately 16–40 Sanskara are found in various "Granthas," however the 16 (Shodasha) Sanskara that apply range from Garbhadhan to Anteyeshti Samskara.² An alternative interpretation of Sanskara: -³

1. Religious rites, sacrifices, and practices are called sacraments, or Samskara. It is believed that the performer's life becomes more holy after carrying them out. In Hinduism, a person's entire life from conception in the mother's womb to death (including funeral rites) is included in Samskara.
2. Sacraments are things that have a sacred influence, an unfathomable meaning, and a symbolic meaning. They also include the fulfillment of a promise.
3. A group of sacraments known as the Samskara serve as rites of passage, a ceremonial event that marks a person's progression from one position to another, commemorate the many stages of human

existence, and signify entry into a particular ashrama.

4. The word Samskar, derived from the root word "Kri" and the upsarga "Sam," has several meanings, including cultivation, education, and training, as well as a ceremonial or purifying process that modifies a person's innate qualities or value.

According to a broad definition that includes almost everything mentioned above, samskara is "to improve upon something while removing its undesirable attributes." The Vedic and Hindu teachings are given significance by Samskara, or sacraments. Throughout this stage of life, we occasionally require different Samskara for spiritual and religious inspiration. These ceremonies, known as Samskara, are intended to cleanse and have a positive impact on our life from conception to death. Religious ceremonies known as Samskara aid in guiding our life toward Dharma, or moral behavior. They support and lead us to greater moral and spiritual heights.

Number of Sanskara:⁴

Number of Sanskara –There are sixteen, Manusmriti thirteen, and Gautama forty, according to Maharshi Dayanand. The ancient science of Ayurveda offers a distinct explanation for our rituals and Samskaras. The rites of passage in a person's life are their "Sanskara". Samskara's "Samskarohi Gunantaradhanm" improves excellence by virtue of certain qualities.

II. CLASSIFICATION OFSODASH SAMSKARA

A. Garbhavastha

1. Garbhadhan
2. Punsavanam
3. Seemantonayanam

B. Balyavastha

1. Jaatakarmaam
2. Namakaranam
3. Nishkraamanam Samskara
4. Annaprasnam
5. Choodaakaranam
6. Karnavedhanam
7. Upanayanam
8. Vedaarambham

C. Yuvavastha

1. Samaavartanam

2. Vivaaham
3. Vaanprastha
4. Sanyasam
5. Antyesthi

1. Garbhadhanam Sanskara–Vaidik tradition holds that a child is born out of love. Bringing the soul into the world and nurturing it in a way that helps the community is considered a tremendous service to humanity. The best method for bringing another soul into the world is a process that is fully described in the Vedas. The process begins with Garbhadhanam Sanskara.⁵Garbha means womb itself, while Dhan means to establish. This was done to welcome the changed man from the planet Garbhadhanam Sanskara. It is a tradition practiced before conception to ensure a holy and healthy child. Garbhadhanam Sanskara is created when a husband and wife choose to conceive a kid together and raise them together.⁶

Significance of Garbhadhan-In this ceremony, field and seed are refined and purified, and a healthy child is born.

2. Punsavanam Sanskara -Out of the sixteen Sanskaras, this is the second one. Punsavanam is a compound pun that means soul and movement, while Savana means festival. Contrary to popular belief, Punsavanam was not designed to create only male kids. The ritual is carried out to ensure the fetus's safety during pregnancy and avoid miscarriage, regardless of its gender. When pregnancy initially manifests, usually in the second month, and before the embryo starts to move in the womb, Punsavanam is performed. Even now, the fetus is still a ball.⁷Punsavanam is made to guarantee the safety and well-being of the developing fetus. The purpose of the deed is to respect the fetus's consciousness.

Significance of Punsavahan-The meaning of this Sanskara is to raise the child's remarkable and spiritual potential. A husband and wife will become closer as a result of this, united by their desire to have children. The significance of this Samskara is that it invokes the child's noble and celestial qualities. The husband and wife's desire for a male child will strengthen their bond and unite them.⁸

3. Seemantonayanam Sanskara Seemantonayanam Sanskara is the third well-performed Sanskara in the fourth or seventh month of pregnancy. A safe birth and the mother's happiness are greatly influenced by

culture. As the day of delivery approaches, the mother's body begins to undergo a number of physical and hormonal changes. A child who is practically an adult is also adjusting. That's what Seemantonayanam suggests. Anta signifies the finish, Seema the border, Nayan the eyes, and unn the opening. Therefore, the exact meaning of Seemantonayanam is to open your eyes and transcend barriers. The event's goal is to make the air healthier for the mother and baby. The woman's family, invited friends, and relatives get together. The pregnant woman's every want is met, acknowledged, and fulfilled. The mother and child receive blessings and gifts from them. Making sure the mother is completely satisfied is the aim of this.⁹

Significance of Simantonayan. The woman will flourish and the unborn kid will live a long life thanks to this Samskara.

4. Jatakarma Sanskara -Jatakarma is the fourth of 16 Sanskaras and the first after childbirth. Whereas Jata represents creation, Karma represents action. As a result, the compound word "Jatakarma" describes the customs that need to be followed immediately after birth. These are meant to celebrate a kid's birth and to deepen the bond between a father and his child. One characteristic of the practice has been the recitation of Vaidik songs in praise of Devi Saraswati, the Goddess of knowledge and wisdom.¹⁰

Significance of Jatkarma Samskara-

1. The newborn should be examined during this operation to rule out abnormalities including cleft pallet, hare lips, trachea-esophageal fistula, and fissured tongue.
2. Because it decreases PPH, inhibits conception, and aids in uterine involution, it promotes breastfeeding.
3. An assessment is conducted on the reflex coordination of sucking and sucking-swallowing.
4. The initial meal initiates gastrointestinal processes and stimulates the gut.
5. Honey's antibacterial properties increase immunity.
6. Ghrita increases Smriti, Medha, Kanti, voice, oja, strength, Vishahar, and Rakshoghan.

5. Namakaranam Sanskara–Namakarana, meaning "naming," is a cultural ritual of the Vaidik people. An audible name is given to the youngster. The initial letter is selected from the Vaidik child's horoscope.

One letter from the child's horoscope will be used to determine their name. Names that relate to the god, virtues, constellations, lucky stars, the parents' children, the site of birth, or beautiful natural elements like trees, flowers, birds, etc. are chosen. Each of us is born with a command. There is a sound that each constellation can identify. That sound is emphasized in a person's Vaidik horoscope when naming a child. It is not Vaidik to choose a child's name prior to birth. Jatakarma and Namakarana are sometimes combined. According to Ayurveda this ceremony should be performed on the 10th day or 12th day or 100th day or after 1 year.¹¹

Significance of Naamakarana– It gives the youngster a distinct identity that they can recognize in the world.

6. Nishkramana Sanskara–Nishkramana represents the first migration. It's the sixth of sixteen, Sanskara. According to Vyasa Smriti, on Nishkramana Day, a Swastika sign is inscribed on a square area of the yard where the sun is visible and covered with clay and cow dung. The baby's mother wraps it with rice. The moment the baby is brought to the site, the incident begins. At the end of the ceremony, the father makes the baby look at the sun as a conchshell is sounded and Vaidik hymns are sung. The child is shown the beautiful symbols as well as the Temple and any other place where the family has faith. The optimal time to perform Nishkramana is during the fourth month following birth.¹²

Significance of Nishkraamana-

- 1) This makes it easier to confirm that the sense organs especially the eyes and ears are operating normally.
- 2) The child should be able to identify AYUSH items, even though eye movement and coordination may be lacking in the first several weeks.

7. Annaprashanam Sanskara -The seventh Sanskara, Annaprashanam, in Vaidik tradition, marks the baby's first meal without the mother's milk. The literal translation of Annaprashanam is "to eat food." Typically, the ritual honors the priest who decides what is best for the child. It is usually done six to eight months after the baby is born, or when teeth begin to erupt. The fact that the baby is still just eating the mother's food makes today exceptional. While the child is still in the womb, the mother feeds it. After birth, it will only be given its mother's milk.

Annaprashanam Sanskara is meant to honor the day and reassure the baby that the world's mother will now be raising them. This is a joyous moment. Family, friends, and neighbors are welcome to attend this unique event. The child is suitably served the rice dessert while reciting the words of Prasad as part of the Annaprashanam Sanskara. Ayurveda advises gradually decreasing breastfeeding and providing solid food to the baby based on his or her needs starting in the seventh month.¹³

Significance of Annaprashana–

- 1) It provides essential elements that are deficient in breast milk, such as iron.
- 2) When a child's teeth erupt, they should be given fruit juice and light, digestible nutrients as an alternative.
- 3) It alters the flavor and improves the perception of taste.
- 4) At six months, a child's growth requires more than breast milk, so it's important to build his digestive system so he may eat light meals and drink fruit juice.

8. Chudakarma Sanskara – Chudakarma Sanskara is also known as the Mundan, or hairdresser. It stands for renewal, purification, and new growth. As mantras are sung, the child is granted the advantages of fame, prosperity, and longevity. According to tradition, a person's hair at birth is associated with negative traits from past lives. The baby simply shaved at the mundana to symbolize letting go of the past and moving forward. The holiday is seen as a special occasion for both young boys and girls in many homes.¹⁴

Significance of Choodakarma-

- 1) To examine the child's handwriting.
- 2) Between 18 and 24 months, the anterior fontanel normally closes.
- 3) Decreased closure brought on by dehydration makes it possible to diagnose meningitis.
- 4) Depending on the home, Choodakarma Sanskar can be performed between the ages of 6 and 10 months.

9. Karnavedhan Sanskara–Karnavedhan is the ninth of the 16 Sanskaras in the Vaidik tradition. Karna means ear, and Vedhan means piercing. Ear piercings are involved in this event. In certain areas, the Karnavedhan performance is considered to be just as important as the formal Upanayanam. Ear piercings

are claimed to improve memory. It has a unique value when applied to both male and female children.¹⁵

Significance of Karnayadhana-

- 1) This Samskara permits children to wear jewelry and shields them from numerous ailments.
- 2) It provides active immunity and initiates the child's antigen-antibody reaction.
- 3) Children as young as two years old can perform Karnayadhana Sanskar.

10. Vidyarambham Sanskara- Vidya means knowledge, and Arambha signifies beginning. Vidyarambham Sanskara is the tenth of the sixteen Sanskaras in the Vaidik tradition. The child is introduced to the realm of knowledge through this Sanskara. It is customary to observe Vijayadashami, Vidyarambham, on the last day of Navratri. Children are formally taught languages, dance, music, and other traditional arts. covers the Syllabary alphabet launch event. Usually, learning to write begins with writing a mantra or OM symbol. The child writes in the sand or a plate of rice while being watched over by an adult in the house and a cleric conducting the event, usually the Guru.¹⁶

Significance of Vidyarambham Sanskara-

Children are initiated into formal education through the culturally and spiritually significant rite of Vidyarambham Samskara, which promotes social, moral, and cognitive development while respecting the sanctity of knowledge.

11. Upanayanam Samskara- For Brahmin, Kshatriya, and Vaishya, this ceremony was done in the fifth, sixth, and eighth years, respectively, according to Mansmruti. They provide a sacred thread girdle made of MUNJA grass. As soon as a child is prepared, schooling should start, according to Sushruta and Vagbhata.¹⁷

Significance of Upanayanam-

- 1) To initiate the child's sense of responsibility and spiritual growth.
- 2) Assessment of the school-age brain's potential for intellectual engagement.
- 3) To assess physical growth in order to exclude feeding.

12. Vedarambha Sanskara –Vedarambha is the twelfth of sixteen Sanskara in the Vaidik tradition. Veda means to know, and Arambha means to start. Thus, the Vedarambha literally marks the beginning of Vedic scholarship. This function is held on any auspicious

day after Upanayanam. In front of the sacred fire, the student vows to devote himself to his Guru and live a moral life. The student follows Brahmacharya's route and concentrates only on his academics. The disciple should be taught how to be polite and lead a moral life.¹⁸

Significance of Vedarambha Samskara - By this child should learn his work by himself.

13. Samavartana Sanskara -Keshant is the name of the next season of Sanskara for boys. The Vaidik Tradition states that Keshant, which translates to "haircut," is the thirteenth of the sixteen Sanskaras. The beginning of facial hair or the student's first shave at sixteen is associated with this Sanskara. On the other hand, after a girl's first menstrual cycle, this Sanskara is performed differently. As the girl is dressed appropriately and given fruits and sweets, the women sing lovely songs to lift her spirits. Every Sanskara is still made to look the same for both men and women. According to this Sanskara, men and women will henceforth employ different techniques.¹⁹

Significance of Samavartana-

1) This Sanskara ceremony aims to achieve spiritual, cultural, and psychological goals.

2) During this ceremony, the individual was briefed on the rights and obligations of the subsequent phase.

14.VivahaSanskara - VivahaSanskara is one of the most important and complex of the 16 Sanskaras in the Vaidik Tradition. Vivaha is a sign of marriage. According to Vaidik tradition, a man and a woman can only become one by starting a family. A guy and a lady are bound together by their enduring friendship. According to the Vedas, a person can get married after finishing the life of a celibate student at Brahmacharya Ashram. One of the major festivals in VivahaSanskara is the Saptapadi, or seven sacred vows. Both the bride and groom have promised to keep their word. They act as a guide for a couple on how to remain true to one another and keep their marriage joyful. Two individuals who are equal partners in their relationship experience vivaha. Each party makes a commitment to both themselves and their companions. When the bride and groom are old enough to comprehend one another, this Sanskara is performed. Child marriage is not accepted in Vaidik culture.²⁰

Significance of VivahaSanskara -

The transition from Brahmacharya (student life) to Gr̥hasthasrama (householder stage) is marked by

Vivaha Samskara, one of the sixteen rites of passage. Vivaha Samskara is more than just a social agreement; it is a comprehensive ritual that encompasses physical health, psychological balance, moral commitments, cultural continuity, and preparing for healthy progeny. It is a prime example of Ayurveda's strategy for promoting and preventing both individual and community health.

15.Vanprasta Samskara- This is the story of his own son coming home from school, leaving the house, untying himself from his family, and going to the Vanpratashrama. As one transitions from material involvement to spiritual advancement, Vanaprastha Samskara is a rite that guarantees social wisdom, family harmony, psychological well-being, and graceful aging. Because it integrates community supervision, spiritual maturity, and preventative health, it is still highly relevant in today's geriatric and public health settings.²¹

Significance ofVanprasta Samskara-

Gr̥hastha is followed by Vanaprastha, which translates to "retiring to the forest." It symbolizes releasing oneself from active worldly obligations and preparing oneself for spiritual endeavors.

16.AntyeshtiSanskara -Antyeshti is the last Sanskara in the soul's journey to Earth. Antyeshti literally means "the last sacrifice." This alludes to the burial traditions of the departed. It is also known as Antim Sanskara and AntyaKriyaor Vahni Sanskara. When the body is burned, the Vaidik words are chanted and ceremonies are performed according to Vaidik tradition. The five elements that comprise the human body and the universe are air, water, fire, earth, and atmosphere. During the final passing process, the body is returned to these five elements and its origins. The corpse is burned as a final sacrifice to remind people that although the body dies, the spirit, or Brahman, lives on.²²

Significance ofAntyeshti Sanskara- An important ritual for spiritual, psychological, and social reasons, Antyeshti Samskara guarantees the respectful burial of the deceased, aids in the soul's release, eases the grief of the family, and upholds moral and cultural principles.

Why Samskara is important in our lives: -

An inner monster that threatens the individual as well as society at large is triggered when Samskara is

absent. Consequently, these Samskara create a sense of fraternity among individuals by binding them to one another. He competes with the world in his own self-serving race because someone who is close to others would surely think twice before committing a violation. Shodasha Samskara's relevance to science.

Without doubt, this Samskara would think twice before committing a transgression. The devil inside us is killed by Samskara. Improve and broaden our cultural ceremonial for rites of passage.²³

III. RESEARCH MAP BY SANSKARA (MEASURES, RESULTS, AI DATA TYPES)

Sanskara	Primary Period	Hypothesized Pathways	Outcomes (examples)	Candidate Measures (proposed indicators)	AI/Tech Capt
Garbhadhana	Preconception	Intentionality, stress reduction, marital alignment	Time-to-pregnancy, relational quality	PREPARE/FA fertility metrics; dyadic adjustment scales	NLP on counseling transcripts; knowledge graphs for protocol variants
Puṁsavana	1st–2nd trimester	Maternal affect, dietary adherence	Maternal stress, GWG, BP	PSS-10((Perceived Stress Scale – 10 items), PHQ-9(Patient Health Questionnaire – 9 items), dietary logs	Wearables for HRV/sleep; speech emotion from chants (opt-in)
Simantonnayana	2nd–3rd trimester	Social support, ritual touch/music	Social support index, cortisol	MSPSS (Multidimensional Scale of Perceived Social Support); salivary cortisol	Computer vision for synchrony; audio for tempo/entrai
Jātakarma	Birth	Skin-to-skin, colostrum emphasis	Early breastfeeding, bonding	LATCH score (breastfeeding assessment tool); oxytocin (research)	EHR linkage; timeline alignment
Nāmakaraṇa	Neonatal	Identity, family cohesion	Parental sensitivity	CARE-Index (Child Adult Relationship Experimental Index)	NLP (Natural Language Processing) for naming narratives (semantics/m
Niṣkramaṇa	3–6 months	Sun/outdoor structured exposure	Vit-D status, circadian consolidation	Actigraphy; 25(OH)D (hydroxyvitamin D)	Geospatial daylight models; acti
Annaprāśana	6 months	Weaning, diverse textures, social meal	Growth, food acceptance	WHO z-scores; Food Neophobia Scale	Image-based bite estimation; di
Cūḍākaraṇa	Infancy	Grooming, tactile regulation	Distress recovery, hygiene	Infant behavior coding	CV for affect; acoustics for cry recover
Karṇavedha	Infancy/child	Pain coping ritualization	Pain tolerance, infection rates	FLACC scale (Face, Legs, Activity, Cry, Consolability); follow-up	Safety surveillance via mHealth
Vidyārambha	4–6 yrs	Playful learning onset	Literacy interest, fine motor	Emergent literacy tests	Handwriting/pen-trace analytics

Upanayana	8–12 yrs	Discipline, breath/chant routines	Self-control, HRV (Heart Rate Variability)	Stroop/Go-No-Go; HRV (Heart Rate Variability)	Voice ML for meter; biofeedback
Vedarambha	Adolescence	Study habits, peer identity	Grit, study hours	Grit-S, time-use diaries	Passive sensing phone usage
Samāvartana	Late teens	Role transition	Career readiness, prosociality	Civic engagement scales	Longitudinal graf
Vivāha	Adult	Dyadic coping, networks	Marital quality, health	DAS-7; (Dyadic Adjustment Scale) illness days	Causal ML on cohort data
Vānaprastha	Mid-life	Generativity, mentoring	Well-being, volunteering	Ryff/WHO-5 (Psychological Well-Being Scales)	NLP life-review
Antyeṣṭi	End-of-life	Grief rituals, closure	Complicated grief, social support	PG-13-R; (Prolonged Grief-13 Revised) network density	Grief support chatbots (assistive), network analytics

IV. DISCUSSION

Only religious purifying rites and ceremonies that sanctify a person's body and mind and help him become a good member of the community make up Sanskara. Samskara feeds and purifies him, and bestows honor and decency onto him. Samskara introduces human completeness. We learn about the ideal human lifestyle and code of conduct from these rules. Our Rishi gives us insight into our responsibilities, from the burial rites to the childbirth ceremonies. A man's morale and good behavior might make him Sanskari and earn him respect in society. Self-discipline, self-control, and life balance all depend on Sanskara. Sanskara based on dharma. Sanskaras is passed down and preserved from generation to generation.

These Sanskara bind individuals to communities founded on a spirit of fraternity. People will definitely think twice before committing a transgression if they act in a way that others can relate to. When Sanskara is not there, a person may feel joy in their body and their instincts may be triggered. The emergence of the inner demon leads to personal degradation and ultimately the demise of society because society is shaped by its members. If you don't acknowledge that you are a part of human society, your drive to compete with it and put yourself before others will destroy not only you but also human society as a whole. Sanskara are consequently necessary and act as a community's moral code of behavior. Benefits of Sanskara include physical and mental health as well as the confidence to

face life's challenges. These improve concentration and cognitive function and promote mental regeneration. Sanskara has the power to transmit culture, empathy, and a feeling of community. By directing their energies into humanitarian issues, they cultivate a strong personality. With their help, one can eradicate pride, selfishness, anger, jealousy, greed, desire, sloth, and fear. They provide life with a moral and physical balance. Most importantly, Sanskara provides you the strength to confront death.

V.CONCLUSION

A careful, considerate study program can pinpoint the elements of Shodasha Sanskara that provide measurable secular advantages (such breath control, hygiene, and social support) while fully respecting their fundamental spiritual purpose. AI has the potential to preserve manuscripts, model ritual structure, enhance instruction, support tough trials, and chronicle, understand, and assist when requested.

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