



ISSN: 0975-833X

Available online at <http://www.journalcra.com>

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL
OF CURRENT RESEARCH

International Journal of Current Research
Vol. 15, Issue, 09, pp.25976-25978, September, 2023
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.24941/ijcr.46032.09.2023>

REVIEW ARTICLE

CONTROVERSIAL ASPECT OF GOJIHVA

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ARTICLE INFO ABSTRACT

Article History:

Received 25th June, 2023
Received in revised form
27th July, 2023
Accepted 25th August, 2023
Published online 27th September, 2023

Key words:

Controversy, Gojihva, Samhita, Nighantu,
Sandigdha Dravya.

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Citation: Uma Singh Sachan and Anil Kumar Singh. 2023. "Controversial aspect of gojihva". International Journal of Current Research, 14, (09), 25976-25978.

Controversial drugs are the drugs which possess uncertainty related to their identification by means of nomenclature. Perplexing synonyms are the root cause for controversy. "Sandigdha Dravya" is a term used for those medicinal plants which are mentioned in Ayurvedic classics but their exact botanical source is not known. Hence, it is our duty to develop reliable methodologies for correct identification, standardization and quality assurance of Ayurvedic drugs. Different samhitas and nighantus were reviewed to ensure correct botanical identity of the drug and to resolve the controversy. The different botanical identities are compared in Samhita and Nighantu most suitable drug is concluded. The correct botanical identification is achieved on basis of morphological and pharmacological activity of drug.

INTRODUCTION

Controversial drugs have their derivation in past¹. Uncertainty in Ayurveda is reflected in the interpretation of names and description of drugs found in the books like Charak Samhita and Sushruta Samhita. Moreover the descriptions of a plant in the ancient literature are found in versus having ample use of synonym. These synonyms have caused controversy in the identification of plants and hence the correct source sometime is misleading with a fictitious plant. Gojihva is made of two words- Go and Jihva. Gojihva widely used in Ayurvedic medicine, the traditional medical system of India is commonly known as Goji, Gaozaban or Sedge. It is commonly used for fever, cough, bronchitis, rhinitis, stomatitis, jaundice, constipation, epilepsy, kidney disease & weakness of cardiac muscles by the tribal people of the Western Ghats. According to early literature, the aerial part of Gojihva is known traditionally for the treatment of asthma and bronchitis. Gojihva is considered among controversial drugs.

The botanical sources of Gojihva are considered as

- Onosma bracteatum
- Elephantopus scaber
- Launaea pinnatifida
- Anchusa strigosa
- Coccinia glauca

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This literary review was compiled from Ayurvedic text, relevant Botany books, research published articles, Samhita, Nighantu, PubMed, Google Scholar, Medline etc.

CHARAK SAMHITA²: Gojihva has been mentioned in Shak Varga (Ch. Su. 27/97) as Kapha-pitta shamak. It has been used in form of lepa in Visarpa Vrana (Ch. Chi. 21/84). It is used as lepa in Nakhkshat as well as Dantkshat and the pharmacological actions shown are vishaghna. It is Vranaropak (Ch. Chi. 25/89).

SUSHRUTA SAMHITA³: Gojihva is used in Shak varga (Su. Su.14/262). It is used in various diseases as Vrana (Su. Su.17/19) and Jwara (Su. Ut. 39/150).

ASHTANG SANGRAH⁴: Gojihva is mentioned in Shak varga (A. S. Su. 7/116). It is used in Jirna Jwar (A. S. Chi. 2/116) and vana (A. S. Ut. 30/72). The pharmacological actions are Vishaghna (A. S. Ut. 46/83).

ASHTANG HRIDAYA⁵: Gojihva is mentioned in Shak varga (A. H. Su. 6/67) and pharmacological actions are Kapha-pitta shamak. It is used in nakha and danta visha (A. H. Ut. 38/40).

GOJIHVA IN NIGHANTUS

BOOK	REFERENCE	INDICATION	SYNONYMS
Abhidhan Manjari ¹²	05/784	Shuk Dhanya Shak	
	03/25	Ekarth Varga Shak	
Abhidhan Ratna Mala ¹³	06/84	Kustha	
Amarkosh ¹⁴	Dwitiya 01/119	Van Aushadhi Varga	
Kaiyadev ¹⁵ Nighantu	01/733-735	Graahi, Hridya, Kasa, Aruchi, Shwas, Prameha, Jwara, Vrana.	Darvipatrika, Darvika, Kosthamulika, Gobhi, Goli, Bhumikalika
Nighantu Shesh ¹⁶	02/259	Gulma	Shringberi, Darvika, Bhumikalika, Kharpardini
Ashtang Nighantu		Viprakirma varga	Shakraj, Bhootvasa, Karkashachhad, Gojulika, Goji, Kroshtukmulak
Paryayratnamala ¹⁷	598		Darvipatrika
Shodhala Nighantu		Karveeradi gana as Shak	
Siddha mantra Prakash		Kaphapittaghna varga	Darvipatrika
Hriday Deepak Nighantu			Dandotpal, Sahdevi, Darvipatrika
Kaiyadev Nighantu		Aushadhi varga	Godhumika, Darvipatrika, Darvika, Goji, Goli, Bhumikalika
Bhav Prakash Nighantu ¹⁸	04/250	Guduchyadi varga-Grahini, Hridya, Prameha, Kassa, Vrana, Jwara.	Gojika, Gobhi, Darvika, Kharpardini
	10/32	Shak varga - Kustha, Prameha, Mutrakricha, Jwara	
Madan Pal ¹⁹ Nighantu	01/292	Abhayadi Varga- Grahini, Hridya, Prameha, Kasa, Vrana, Jwara	Gojika, Gobhi, Darvika, Swarpardini
	10/67	Dhanya varga	
Raj Nighantu ²⁰	04/86-87	Shavahyadi varga Vran Ropan Danta& Visha Roga	Kharpatri, Pratna, Darvika, Adhomukha, Dhenujihwa, Adahpushpi
Saraswati Nighantu	01/44		Gojika, Gobhi, Darvika, Kharpardini

PHARMACOLOGICAL ACTION OF GOJIHVA

Book	Rasa	Guna	Veerya	Vipaka	Prabhav
A.N. ⁶	Tikta	-	Sheeta	Katu	Kapha-pitta nashan
K.N. ⁷	Kashaya, Tikta, Madhura	Laghu	Sheeta	Madhur	Vata karak, Kapha-pitta nashan
D.N. ⁸	Kashaya, Tikta	-	Sheeta	Katu	-
B.P.N. ⁹	Kashaya, Tikta	Laghu, Mridu	Sheeta	Madhur	Vatala, Kapha-pitta hara
M.P.N. ¹⁰	-	Laghu	Sheeta		Vatala, Kapha-pitta hara
R.N. ¹¹	Katu	Tivra	Sheeta		Pitta nashan

DISCUSSION

Botanical Description

*Onosma bracteatum*²¹

Habitat and ecology: Well drained, light soil required for the plant which is present in sun facing slopes like Western Himalayas as well as Central Himalayas from Kashmir to Kumaon ranging from 3500-4500 mts height. In Himachal Pradesh, it is tremendously found in the districts of Kangra, Chamba, Kinnaur, Lahaul and Spiti.

Distinguishing features: It is a perennial, hirsute or hispid herb with narrow leaves.

Life cycle: The plant flowers during the months of August-September. Fruiting takes place in September -October.

Morphology: It is a large, herbaceous perennial shrub of 40 cm height. Stem is simple hairy, arising from a cluster of radical leaves, with a black, woody rootstock, 2.5-5 cm in diameter, terminating in a knotty head from which arise several stems, erect or ascending. Stem is rough due to white, hard, hispid hairs and longitudinal wrinkles, color greenish-yellow, fracture, short, odour and taste not characteristic. Root is purplish red from inside and the stem is simple and rarely branched, thickly studded with calcareous tubercles and armed with bristles. Leaves are entire, thick, petiolate, lanceolate to ovate-lanceolate, 12-30 cm long, 1.5-3.5 cm broad, acuminate tubercle-based hispid hairs present on both surfaces; greenish to light yellow on top and white beneath. The lower leaves are stalked, narrow lanceolate, rough, bristly hairy above and paler silky white beneath.

The upper leaves are smaller in size. Flowers are deep blue, later turning purplish in colour, trumpet shaped, silky, glomerate cluster and are thickly covered by white stiff bristles.

Taxonomical Classification

Kingdom: Plantae
 Subkingdom: Tracheophytes
 Super division: Angiosperms;
 Division: Eudicots;
 Class: Asterids;
 Order: Asterales;
 Family: Asteraceae;
 Sub family: Boraginoideae;
 Genus: *Onosma*;
 Species: *bracteatum*;

Elephantopus scaber: It is erect, 15.38 cm. high, stem usually dichotomously branched, strigose with white hair. Leaves are mostly radical forming a spreading rosette on the ground, rounded or subacute, coarsely serrate, more or less hairy on both the surfaces. Heads numerous, sessile, forming a large flat topped terminal inflorescence surrounded by 3 larger stiff, corolla violet, tube long, slender, limb deeply cleft on one side. Pappus white, consisting of 5 rigid bristles dilated at the base. Achenes 5 mm. long, truncate, finely 10 ribed slightly pubescent.

Launaea pinnatifida: *Launaea pinnatifida* is well known and valuable herb as per the traditional and Ethnobotanical information. This plant has been used since ancient time as herbal remedy for jaundice, diuretic, blood purifier and hepatoprotective action by the

tribal people of the Western Ghats. Microscopic evaluation confirmed the presence of the lignified cork cells parenchyma with prismatic crystals. The root powder of the drug confirms the existence of mucilage, tannins, starch, lignin and crystals. Pharmacognostical studies reveals the presence of many primary and secondary metabolites including carbohydrates, alkaloids, amino acids, glycosides, steroids and tannin in root powder.

Anchusa strigosa: *Anchusa strigosa* is a perennial herb, with a rosette of leaves at its base and an inflorescence stem that rises to a height of one meter or more. The leaves are rough as the tongue of a ruminant. The plant grows lean and is often scraggy, from whence the modern taxonomic name of the species (*strigosa*) takes its name. In winter the plant grows a large rosette of leaves, and in late spring a few inflorescence stems grow from the base of the plant. The petiole is nail-like (9 mm long) and has a narrow tube and a closed pharynx with bristly white scales. The flower of the *Anchusa strigosa* is blue. However, there is a white flower variety of the plant that is gradually displacing the blue variety.

Coccinia glauca: A herbaceous climber with branchlets apically pubescent, glabrous at base. Leaves simple, 5-lobed, glabrous, punctate above, glandular below; basal sinus subrotund-cordate, margin denticulate, apex obtuse, mucronate; tendril simple. Flower solitary, dioecious. Male flower: calyx-tube campanulate; corolla campanulate, white, petals 5, ca. 1 cm, glabrous without, villous within. Stamens 3, inserted at the base of calyx-tube, filaments connate into a column, about 3 mm, anthers connate, triplicate, flexous. Female flower: calyx and corolla campanulate. Ovary oblong, glandular-pubescent. placentae 3, ovule indefinite; stigma 3-partite, fimbriate; staminodes 3. Fruit ovoid-oblong, striped, seeds compressed

CONCLUSION

Gojihva is concluded to have more than 20 Samhita based indications and nearly 13 Article concluded effects. Among them Anushastra, Vistravan in Vran, Jihwa and Mukha roga, aruchi and Prameha are Samhita based indications on which there is none availability of appropriate study, which may act as area of further research. On basis of reviewing different Samhitas and Nighantus, in Shakarga, Elephantopus scaber is considered while in medicinal purpose Onosma bracteatum is used.

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