

DARUHARIDRA (BERBERIS ARISTATA, DC.) W.S.R. TO NIGHANTU (INDIAN LEXICON): A CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

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Article Received on
12 Sep 2015,

Revised on 03 Oct 2015,
Accepted on 26 Oct 2015

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ABSTRACT

The *Nighantu* literature is the significant portion in the study of Ayurveda and particularly in the subject of *Dravyaguna Vigyana*. The importance of *Nighantu* has been explained for the first time by *Narhari Pandita* in his work *Raja Nighantu* during 14th cent.A.D. According to him a physician without the knowledge of *Nighantu* (plant pharmacology), a scholar without the knowledge of *Vyakarana* (grammar) and a soldier without the knowledge of *ayudha* (weapons), all these three are criticized at in this world. This statement clearly states that the knowledge of *Nighantu* is indispensable for *Ayurvedic* physician. The plant *Daruharidra* is one of the well known deciduous, thorny shrubs attaining a height of 6-12 feet. It is found in Himalayan

range at the height of about 6000-10500 feet at Neelgiri hills, Sri Lanka, South Africa and Afghanistan etc. *Daruharidra* consist of *Katu-Tikta Rasa*, *Katu –Vipaka* and *Ushna-Veerya*, it is mainly indicated for the treatment of diabetes mellitus, jaundice, anaemia, skin diseases and dysentery etc.

KEYWORDS: *Nighantu* (plant pharmacology), *Dravyaguna Vigyana*, *Daruharidra* (*Berberis aristata* DC), *Prameha*(diabetes mellitus), *Kamala*(jaundice) etc.

INTRODUCTION

The literature on *Dravyaguna vigyana* is generally known as *Nighantu*. The word *Nighantu* is based on the term *Nigama*. The etymology of the term *Nigama* is that which brings out extremely concealed or secret meanings of words. Some *Acharya* says that *Nigama*, *Nirukta* and *Nighantu* are synonyms. Both *Nirukta* and *Nighantu* are the sciences that explain the hidden meaning of the terms denoting different things of vegetable kingdom. The importance

of *Nighantu* has been explained for the first time by *Narhari Pandita* in his work *Raja Nighantu* during 14th cent.A.D. According to him a physician without the knowledge of *Nighantu* (plant pharmacology), a scholar without the knowledge of *Vyakarana* (grammar) and a soldier without the knowledge of *Ayudha* (weapons), all these three are criticized at in this world. This statement clearly states that the knowledge of *Nighantu* is essential for an *Ayurvedic* physician.^[1]

Identification of plants during *Nighantu* period has been made by the lexico-graphic workers like *Narhari Pandit*, *Madanpal*, *Bhavamishra* on medicinal plants. Their contribution is mainly based on identification of plants by giving nomenclature or synonyms. A considerable number of new plants have been added and emphasis was given on cultivation and propagation. They have compiled all the knowledge from *Vedas* and *Samhitas* and reformed them. While giving new name to a plant, the lexico-graphic workers utilized the rich literal heritage of *Sanskrit* giving different names to the same plant and the same name to different plants. The real controversies began when this works were translated into different regional languages, these created problems in the identification of genuine drugs, adulteration by the local stake holders also increased the confusion.^[2]

Description of *Daruharidra* in *Nighantus*

Description of *Daruharidra* regarding its habitat, synonyms and properties as described in *Nighantu*'s are being given here according to their chronological order.

Astanga Nighantu: This treatise was composed by *Acharya Vahatacharya* in 8th cent. A.D. in this treatise *Daruharidra* has been grouped under *Vachadi*, *Haridradi*, *Mustadi Gana* indicated for *Kapha-Vataja* disorders.^[3]

Dhanvantari Nighantu: *Dhanvantari Nighantu* is one of the important works on *Dravyaguna*. This lexicon was composed by *Acharya Mahendra Bhogika* between 10th to 13th cent.A.D. In this *Nighantu* the author has described the drug *Daruharidra* in “*Guduchyadi Varga*” and mentioned it for the treatment of wounds, diabetes mellitus and diseases of eyes & ear.^[4]

Madanpal Nighantu: The *Madanpala Nighantu* is commonly known as *Madanavinoda* and also as *Madana Nighantu*. This *nighantu* was composed by king *Madanpala* in 1374 A.D. He described *Daruharidra* in “*Abhayadi varga*”. Various synonyms like *Darvi*, *Daruharidra*,

Pitadaru, Pachampacha, Katankateri, Pitadru and *Svarnavarna* have been described for the plant. The author has described it for the treatment of eye diseases, ear diseases and mouth disorders.^[5]

Kaideva Nighantu: The original name of *Kaideva Nighantu* is *Pathyapathya Vibodhaka*, this is a medical glossary composed by *Vaidya Kaideva* in 15th century and commented by *prof. P.V.Sharma* and *Guru Prasad Sharma* in hindi language. In this *Nighantu* the drug *Daruharidra* is described under the “*Aushadhi-varga*” for the treatment of ‘*Urdhvajatrugat diseases*’.^[6]

Bhavaprakash Nighantu: This *nighantu* was composed by *Acharya Bhava Mishra* and placed it under “*Haritakyadi-Varga*”. He emphasized that it bears same properties like turmeric and can be given for the cure of diseases *Vishama jwara*, *Phiranga* (syphilis), *Gandamala* (goiter), *Garbhini-vamana* (Hyperemesis gravidorum), *Yakrit-pliha vriddi* (hepatomegaly and splenomegaly), *Kamala* (jaundice), *Sarpadansha* (snake poisoning), *mutrashamari* (urinary calculi), diseases of urinary tract, *Trishna* (thirst), *Daha* (burning sensation), *Vastishotha* (cystitis), diabetes mellitus and ear-nose-throat diseases. *Rasanjan* is a formulation prepared from the condensation of decoction of *Daruharidra* along with goat’s milk.^[7]

Raj Nighantu: This was composed by *Acharya Narhari Pandita* in 17th cent. He described it under “*Pippalyadi-Varga*” and mentioned it for the treatment of itching, erysipelas, skin-diseases, diabetes mellitus, *Visham jwara* etc.^[8]

Rajvallabha Nighantu: This was composed by *Shri Raj Vallabh* in 18th cent. He mentioned the drug as *Kapha* and *Kleda nashaka Dravya*.^[9]

Brahan Nighantu Ratnakar: *Brahan Nighantu Ratnakar* was composed by *Shri Khem Raj* in 19th cent. According to him heart wood of the plant looks yellow in color and have better medicinal value in comparison to its other parts, so it should be used for medicinal purposes he has given a preparation named *Darvyadadi kwath* for the treatment of *Jwara* (fever) in which *Daruharidra* is the main ingredient.^[10]

Saligram Nighantu: This *nighantu* was narrated by *Shaligram Vaishya* in 19th cent. He has given the synonyms of *Daruharidra* and has followed his senior about the description of the drugs.^[11]

Nighantu Kalpadruma: It was narrated by *Vaidya shri Sudarshan Lal Trivedi* in hindi in 1958 A.D. Medicinal drugs have been described according to their alphabetical qualities in this text. He has described that *Daruharidra* is yellow in colour and effective for wounds, diabetes mellitus, skin disorder and eye disorders etc.^[12]

Ayurvedic Aushadhi Nighantu: This *nighantu* was compiled by *Kumara Krisha* in 1966. According to him the useful part of plant is barks, which are *Tikta-Rasa*, *Ruksha-Guna*, *Ushna-Veerya* and *Katu in Vipaka*.^[13]

Mahaushadha Nighantu: It was composed by *Shri I.P.Tripathi* and compiled by *Aryadas Kumar Singh* in 1971. The book is also famous by the name “*Dravya Nama Guna Hastapustika*”. It contains detailed description of synonyms, *Guna*, *Karma*, habitat and morphology of *Daruharidra*. Ultimately *Acharya* mentioned that the properties of this plant is similar to ‘*Haridra*’ and can be given for the cure of diabetes mellitus, itching, erysepelas, skin diseases, eye diseases ,ear and throat diseases etc.^[14]

Nighantu Adarsh: This treatise is written by *Bapalal ji Vaidya* in 1968. The drug *Daruharidra* has been described under ‘*Daruharidradi Varga*’. The use of drug has been given according to *Charaka*, *Sushruta*, *Vagbhata*, *Sodhala* and *Sharangdhar*.^[15]

Sadras Nighantu: It is edited in 1977 by *Prof. P.V.Sharma* in 1977. It is one of the *nighantu* in synonymous style. He has described *Daruharidra* under *Tikta skhanda* with the synonyms *Darvi*, *Pachampacha*, *Peetdaru*, *Darunisha*, *Parjanya*, *Kaleyaka*, *Kantkateri* etc.

Priya Nighantu: *Priya nighantu* is compiled by *Acharya P.V.Sharma* in 1983. He has mentioned *Daruharidra* under ‘*Satpushpadi Varga*’and indicated for diabetes, blood disorders, eye diseases and hepatic disorders etc.^[16]

Basonyms and Synonyms of Daruharidra in Nighantus

S. N.	Synonyms	Dh. N.	M.P. N.	K. N	B.P. N.	R. N	M.Au. N.	M.V. N.	B.N. R	Sh. N	N.A dr	N.Sh .
1	Daruharidra	+	+		=	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
2	Darunisha	+		+						+	+	+
3	Darvi	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+
4	Darupita					+				+		+
5	Darbya								+			
6	Hemavati								+	+		
7	Haridra			+						+		

8	Hemakanta	+								+		+
9	Hemakanti			+						+		
10	Katankateri							+				
11	Kapitaka									+		
12	Kantakateri	+	+	+	+	+		+				+
13	Kaleyak	+			+		+					+
14	Katankati		+									
15	Kashtha						+			+		
16	Kasha						+					
17	Kamavati					+				+		+
18	Kantakati		+					+				+
19	Kaliyaka				+	+	+		+	+		+
20	Kamini					+				+		+
21	Kaleykama	+								+		
22	Kusumbha	+								+		
23	Karkatakini					+				+		
24	Kashtha						+			+		
25	Parjani						+			+		+
26	Pachampacha	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		+	+	+
27	Pitadru	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		+		+
28	Pitachandan	+		+						+		+
29	Parjjanya	+		+	+	+	+			+		+
30	Parniti				+							
31	Pitadaru	+	+	+	+	+	+	+		+		+
32	Pitadvya	+										
33	Pitaka	+			+	+	+			+		+
34	Pita	+			+		+			+		+
35	Rajani								+			
36	Ratridaru											+
37	Rajniyugma								+			
38	Stharaga					+				+		+
39	Swarnavarna		+					+				
40	Sudaru			+								

* Dh.N.-Dhanvantari Nighantu, M.P.N.-Madan Pal Nighantu, K.N.-Kaideva Nighantu, B.P.N.-Bhava Prakash Nighantu, R.N.-Raja Nighantu, M.Au.N.-Maha Aushadha Nighantu, M.V.N.- Madan Vinod Nighantu, B.N.R.-Brahana Nighantu Ratnakara, Sh.N.-Shaligram Nighantu, N.Ads.- Nighantu Adarsha, N.Sh.- Nighantu Shiromani.

CONCLUSION

Nighantu are the literature on plant pharmacology which plays a significant role in the understanding of *Ayurveda* and chiefly the subject of *Dravyaguna Vigyana*. A physician without the knowledge of *Nighantu* (plant pharmacology) can be criticized at his work. So every *Vaidya* must have proper knowledge of *Nighantus* for proper treatment. *Daruharidra* is

one of the well known deciduous, thorny shrub found in Sub-Himalayan ranges, consist of *Katu-Tikta Rasa*, *Katu –Vipaka* and *Ushna-Veerya*. It is mainly indicated for the treatment of diabetes mellitus, jaundice, anaemia, skin diseases and dysentery etc. The author have tried to compile different synonyms, properties and indication of *Daruharidra* mentioned in different *Nighantus* in chronological order of their development, so one can be familiar with them.

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