



Indian Journal of Agriculture and Allied Sciences

A Refereed Research Journal

ISSN 2395-1109

e-ISSN 2455-9709

Volume: 2, No.: 2, Year: 2016

www.mrfsw.org

Received: 18.06.2016, Accepted: 25.06.2016

A REVIEW OF MEDICINAL USES OF PUNARNAVA (*Boerhaavia diffusa* Linn.) BASED ON KOSHA AND NIGHANTUS

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Abstract: The interest towards Ayurveda is mainly because of its drugs, which are of herbal origin, and are said to be having less adverse effects in comparison to synthetic drugs. Ancient texts related to Ayurveda can be categorized into two types, one related to treatment and other related to information regarding drugs and diet, being called as Chikitsa (treatment) and Nighantu (material medica) granthas (texts) respectively. The present work aims to discuss Punarnava (*Boerhaavia diffusa* Linn.) in Kosha and various Nighantus as manuscripts or just as evidence - in a chronological order. Which is important herbal drug in various aspect that Punarnava has also been used successfully by some Ayurvedic practitioners for Pandu (Anemia), Shotha (Swelling/inflammation), Shopha (Swelling), Hridayoga (Diseases of CVS), Kasa (Cough), Arsha (Hemorrhoids), Vrana (Wound), Urahkshata (Pulmonary cavitations), Shoola (Colic) etc.

Keywords: Ayurveda, Punarnava, Nighantu, Kosha, Pandu, Shotha, Arsha etc.

Introduction: Currently global attention is being increasingly focused on rediscovering and developing the indigenous system of medicine, Ayurveda and its utilization for Primary Health Care. In the course of thousands of year, Ayurveda continued to exist, its basic principles never changed, because they are derived from the universal laws of nature which are true. Ayurveda is said to be Anadi (One which has no known beginning) and Shashvata (one which has no end or it is eternal). This contradicts with modern scientific paradigm, where new theories often render previous understanding completely obsolete within a short period of time. Ayurveda provides knowledge of aetiology, symptomatology and therapeutics, best way for both the healthy and the sick, tri-aphorismic (trishutra) continuing from the time immemorial. The significance of drugs in medical science possesses its key role in clinical management of diseases^[1].

Punarnava (*Boerhaavia diffusa* Linn.) belong to family Nyctaginaceae, commonly known as Spreading Hogweed or Pigweed. It is a very variable, diffusely branched pubescent or glabrous, prostrate herb, abundantly occurring as

a weed throughout India, up to an altitude, 2000 m. Its root is credited with anticonvulsant, diuretic, laxative, expectorant, stomachic properties, also used in asthma, oedema, anaemia, jaundice, ascites, anasarca, scanty urine and internal information^[2].

The interest towards Ayurveda is mainly because of its drugs, which are of herbal origin, and are said to be having less adverse effects in comparison to synthetic drugs. Ancient texts related to Ayurveda can be categorized into two types, one related to treatment and other related to information regarding drugs and diet, being called as Chikitsa (treatment) and Nighantu (material medica) granthas (texts) respectively, written in devanagri script or regional languages. Nighantu described drugs, in a typical manner, by mentioning group of synonyms, reflecting the Properties, actions and uses of drugs. 'A physician without knowledge of Nighantu, a scholar without the knowledge of grammar, and a soldier without knowledge of weapons are ridiculed by people'^[3].

Materials and Methods

Amarkosha (5th cent. A.D.): This book is the compilation done by Amar Singh. In this book

total subject was divided into 3 Kanda. First and second Kanda include 10 chapters each and third part comprises of 5 chapters. The total subject was narrated with synonyms. 'Punarnava' has been mentioned in the 'Vanausadhi Varga' of Bhumyadi kanda with Synonyms Punarnava & Shothaghni ^[4].

Sausruta Nighantu (6th Cent. A.D.): Based on Susruta samhita. In this Nighantu 'Punarnava' has been described in 'Vidarigandhadi Gana' with the synonyms Punarnava, Rishabhketu, Mahavarshabhu, Vrishchiva, Dirghavarshabhu, Shvetamula, Raktavrinta, Kathillaka, Vaishakha, Shinati, Kshudravarshabhu ^[5].

Ashtanga Nighantu (8th Cent. A.D.): In this Nighantu, Acharya Vahata has described maximum group of drugs on the basis of classification of Ashtanga Sangraha and Astanga Hridaya. In addition, some drugs are also mentioned in Viprakirna varga. In this Nighantu 'Punarnava' has been described in 'Vidarigandhadi Gana' with the synonyms Punarnava, Varshaketu, Vrishchiva, Shvetamulaka, Varshabhu, Dirghapatra, Vikasa, Kathillaka, Sunadik, Raktapushpa, Vishakha, Mandalacchada ^[6].

Dhanvantari Nighantu (10th - 13th Cent. A.D.): In the beginning of Nighantu, author pays homage to lord Dhanawantari and again he mentions its name as Dravyavali. At the end of Dravyavali author desires to describe the drugs of Dravyavali with their synonyms and after that he has described their properties and actions along with synonyms. In this Nighantu 'Punarnava' has been described in 'Guduchyadi Varga' with the synonyms Punarnava, krura, Saddhomandalapatraka, Shvetamula, Varshaketu & Mahavarshabhu. It is Tikta in rasa, Pitta-vikar nashaka in dosha-karma, Saraka in guna-karma, and indicated in Shotha, Raktapradar, Pandu roga ^[7].

Sodhala Nighantu (12th Cent. A.D.): This Nighantu was composed by Sodhala in two parts named as Namasangraha dealing with synonyms and Gunasangraha dealing with properties and actions. In Sodhala nighantu 'Punarnava' has been described in 'Guduchyadi Varga' with synonyms in Namasangraha part i.e. Punarnava, Shophaghni, Viksa, Raktapushpika, Varshaketu, Varshabhu, Mahavarshabhu, Shivatika, Sarini, Pravrsayani and Guna in Gunasangraha i.e. Ushna in virya, Kapha & Vata nashak dosha-karma, Bhedana & Rasayana in guna-karma, and it indicated in Durnama (Hemorrhoids), Vardhama, Shophya, Udara rog ^[8].

Hridayadipaka Nighantu (13th Cent. A.D.): The author of this work is Bopadeva son of Keshava. The subject matter of this work is well divided into eight Vargas. It follows metric style of Paryaya ratnamala of Madhava. In this Nighantu 'Punarnava' has been mentioned in 'Dvipadi Varga', with its synonyms Punarnava, Vrishchiva, Varshabhu, Shivatika ^[9].

Abhidhanaratnamala (Sadrasa Nighantu) (13th Cent. A.D.): In Abhidhanaratnamala 'Punarnava' has been described in 'Katudravya Skandha'. Following synonyms are mentioned here Varshabhu, Dirghapatra, Vikasa, Kathillaka, Sunadika, Raktapushpa, Visala, Mandalacchada ^[10].

Madhava-dravyaguna (13th Cent. A.D.): In Madhava dravyaguna 'Punarnava' has been described in 'Vividh-aushadi Varga'. Punarnava is Ushna in virya and Rasayana in guna- karma ^[11].

Madanpala Nighantu (14th Cent. A.D.): Punarnava has been mentioned in Pratham Varga of "Abhayadi varga". Madanapala has included following synonyms i.e. Aruna, Tikta, Raktapushpa, Katillaka, Kruraka, Kshudravarshabhu, Varshaketu & Shivatika. It is Katu, Tikta in rasa, Katu in vipaka, & Shita in virya, Vata karaka & rakta-pitta nashaka in dosh-karma, and has Shophya-anilavrina-shleshma har, Ruchya, Rasayana, , Grahi guna-karma ^[12].

Kaiyadev Nighantu (Pathyapathya Vibodhaka) (15th Cent. A.D.): In this Nighantu is 'Punarnava' described in "Aushadhi Varga" with following synonyms i.e. Punarnava, Punarbhu, Sada, Mandalapatraka, Shvetamula, Varshabhu, Raktapatraka, Shophaghni, Jatila, Saddhyovishoshi, Dirghapatraka. Regarding its properties i.e. Madhur, Tikta, Kashaya, Katu & Kshariya in rasa, Ushna in virya, Ruksh in guna, Vatakapha nashaka in dosha-karma, Saraka, Shotha nashaka in guna-karma and indicated in Arsha, Vrina, Pandu, Visha, & Udar roga ^[13].

Bhavaprakasha Nighantu (16th Cent. A.D.): This book is written by Bhavamishra who is an important landmark in the history of Indian Medicine, because of the fact that he revived the style of Samhitas and contributed a good deal to various aspects of Ayurveda by adding new ideas and drugs. 'Punarnava' has been mentioned in 'Guduchyadi Varga' with synonyms Raktapunarnava, Raktapushpa, Shilatika, Shothaghni, Kshudravarshabhu, Varshaketu, Kathillaka. It is Tikta in rasa, Katu in vipaka, Shita in virya & Laghu in guna, Grahi in guna-

karma, Vata-karaka, Kapha- Pitta-Rakta-Vikar Nashaka in dosha-karma^[14].

Gunaratnamala (16th Cent. A.D.): In Gunaratnamala of Bhavamishra 'Punarnava' is described in 'Guduchyadi Varga'. Its Synonyms are Raktapushpapunarnava, Shilatika, Shothaghni, Kshudravarshabhu, Varshaketu, Kathillaka. It is Tikta in rasa, Katu in vipaka, Shita in virya & Laghu, Grahi in guna and Vata-wardhaka, Kapha,Pitta,Rakta-Vikar Nashaka in dosha-karma. Punarnava is also mentioned in Shaka Varga with Synonyms Punarnava, Raktapushpa, Shivatika & Shothaghni. Its Patra-shaka is Tikta in ras, Ruksha in Guna, Kapha shamaka in dosha-karma, Netrya (Chakshushya) in guna-karma and indicated in Shotha, Pandu, Kshaya, Shvasa, Jvara & Hridaroga^[15].

Rajanighantu (Nighantu Raja, Abhidhana Chudamani) (17th Cent. A.D.): This book is written by Narhari Pandit, who has add first Dravyaguna in Astanga Ayurveda and also gives it first place in ashtanga Ayurveda. This book is particularly based on the Dhanwantari nighantu. The subject matter has been divided into 23 chapters. 'Punarnava' has been described in 'Parpatadi varga' with the Synonyms Raktapunarnava, Krura, Mandalpatrika, Raktakanda, Varshketu, Lohita, Raktapatrika, Vaishakhi, Raktavarshabhu, Shophaghni, Raktapushpika, Viksvara, Vishaghni, Pravrishenya, Sarini, Varshabhav, Shorapatra, Sammilitadruma, Punarnav, Nav, Nachya. It is Tikta in rasa, & pitta Nashaka in dosha-karma, Sarana in guna-karma and indicated in Shopha, Raktapradara Pandu rog^[16].

Adhunika Kala: 'Punarnava' is explained in text books of modern periods such as Dravya guna vigyan by Dr. P. V. Sharma, Priya nighantu, Shankar nighantu, Ayurvedic materia medica, Wealth of India and other books written by recent Acharyas, which provide information about its habit, habitat, morphology, chemical composition etc.

Nighantu Adarsa (20th Cent. A.D.): This book was published in Gujarat, its author, is Vaidya Bapalalji who is the authoritative person of 20th century for identification of Ayurvedic plants. He has mentioned all the relevant materials from different Ayurvedic texts as well as modern medical and botanical works. In Adarsa nighantu 'Punarnava' is described in 'Punarnavadi Varga' with the synonyms Raktapunarnava, Vishakha, Katilla, Kathila, Shothaghni, Mahavarsabhu. It is Katu, Tikta, Kashaya in ras, Katu in vipaka,

Ushna in virya & Kapha-Vata nashaka in dosha-karma^[17].

Priya Nighantu (20th Cent. A.D.): Acharya Priyavrata Sharma in his book Priya Nighantu has described 'Punarnava' in 'Shatpushpadi Varga' & indicated in Shotha, Pandu, Kamla, Hridaroga, Mutrakriccha & Udar rog^[18].

Shankar Nighantu (20th Cent. A.D.): In Shankar Nighantu 'Punarnava' has been described in 'Dwitiya Bhag'. It is Katu in rasa, Saraka in guna, Pitta shamaka in dosh-karma, and it is indicated in Shotha, Raktapradar, & Pandu vikara^[19].

Puspayurveda (20th Cent. A.D.): In Pushpa-Ayurveda there is no reference was found regarding 'Punarnava'^[20].

Discussion: According to WHO about 80% percent of the worldthe population is dependent on the traditional system of medicine, it is essential to intensify the study of medicinal plants. History of drug can be studied under Vaidic kala, Upanishad kala, Purana kala, Samhita kala, Nighantu kala and Adhunika kala.Punarnava (*Boerhaavia diffusa* Linn.) is a popular Prostratic herb, which is used by traditional practioner to cure various ailments. Present study revealed that by the help of literature i.e. Kosha and Nighantus we will reach to medicine very easily and take the benefit by the traditional medicines. The Nighantus generally were coined using a therapeutic text. Authors used the prevailing and popular texts of their time and region as basis to write Nighantus. This explains the emergence of more than one Nighantu during one period. Further, two different Nighantus are seen having groups with same name but have kept different substances under them. This has happened due to the different rationale used in grouping of the substances. This offers a tremendous scope for research in order to explore the therapeutic application of a substance in different regions and era, in the same manner Punarnava was also a popular drug at that time. It has tremendous effect on different diseases viz. Pandu (Anaemia), Shotha (Swelling/inflammation), Shopha (Swelling), Hridaroga (Diseases of CVS), Kasa (Cough), Arsha (Haemorrhoids), Vrana (Wound), Urahkshata (Pulmonry cavitation), Shoola (Colic) etc.

Conclusion: The present review on Punarnava (*Boerhaavia diffusa* Linn.) based on Kosha and Nighantus can be useful in different diseases.The different parts (Mool, Beeja,Panchnga & Patra shaka) of this herb is used.on the basis of

aforesaid in Kosha & Nighantu Punarnava used in different diseases like Shothaghna, Shophaghna, Vishaghna, Arshoghna & Panduhar properties. A detailed clinical study is required to understand the mode of action of this drugs and their efficacy.

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