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

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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 dysentry 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 14\(^{th}\) 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 8\(^{th}\) 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 10\(^{th}\) to 13\(^{th}\) 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, Daruhradra,*
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 15\(^{th}\) 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-plilha vriiddi (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 17\(^{th}\) 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 18\(^{th}\) 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 19\(^{th}\) 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 19\(^{th}\) 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

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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 Nighantu 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 dysentry 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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