Role of Palash (*Butea monosperma*) in Shvitra

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Abstract:
Skin is envelope of our body expressing the harmony inside, it is one of the five dnyanendriyas as told by Ayurveda, which is responsible for the perception of touch. It also performs the functions such as protection of body against physical, chemical, mechanical and biological injuries; thermoregulation etc. One of the most notable components of skin, that contributes to complexion is a pigment known as melanin. When melanin is less or absent in skin leads to hypopigmentary disorder. Shvitra is Hypopigmentary disorder of skin, in which shukla varna appeared on the skin. Acharya Charaka stated that shukla varna comes under the vikruta varna. In Ayurveda more than 600 medicinal plant are included as drug, and they are used either alone or in combination with each other to alleviate the disorders. Palash is one of them, Palash belonging to family Fabaceae, Palash is katu, tikta and kashay in rasa. Its viapk is katu and veerya is ushna, it alleviates kapha and vata dosha but aggravates pitta dosha, in literature it is found that palash is useful in many diseases like trushna, atisar, jwar, charmarog, kushta, apasmar and prameha. Acharya Vagbhat stated in Ashtang Hridaya, that palash is used in shvitra chikitsa, Vagbhata included palash in Asanadi gana. A number of medicine are mentioned for management of shvitra. Like psoralen, ultra violet therapy and corticosteroids in the treatment of shvitra, but they are associated with side effects. Hence, there is need to develop effective medicinal plant for the management of shvitra.

Keywords: Palash, Shvitra, Hypopigmentary disorder

Introduction
Skin is envelope of our body expressing the harmony inside, it is one of the five dnyanendriyas as told by Ayurveda, which is responsible for the perception of touch. It also performs the functions such as protection of body against physical,
chemical, mechanical and biological injuries; thermoregulation etc. One of the most notable components of skin, that contributes to complexion is a pigment known as melanin. Melanin have many additional properties, apart from protection of eyes and skin from harmful UV radiation. Further, their role in colouring human skin and hair gives them a key role in cosmetics. Melanin produced in a specialized group of cells known as melanocyte. Melanocytes possess the enzyme tyrosinase which is necessary for the synthesis of melanin. Decrease the synthesis of melanin leads to Hypopigmentary disorder. Hypopigmentation is also caused by disease, illness, burns, injury, and fungal infection of skin. In Ayurveda all skin disorders are placed under the name of kushtha. Shvitra is considered as one of the varieties of kushtha, that can be correlated with leucoderma. It is caused due to vitiations of tridosha and dhatus like rasa, rakta, mamsa and meda according to harita samhita. Acharya Vagbhat used Palash in shvitra, Palash belonging to family Fabaceae, Palash is katu, tikta and kashay in rasa. Its viapk is katu and veerya is ushna, it alleviates kapha and vata dosha but aggravates Pitta dosha, in various literature it is found that palash is useful in many diseases like trisha, atisar, jwar, charmroog, kushtha, apasmar and prameha.

Materials and methods
Botanical description
Palash is medium sized deciduous tree, 10-15 meters high belonging to the family Fabaceae, is found throughout India. there are four types of Palash rakta, pita, shwet and nila as mentioned by Raj Nighantu. Out of above varieties, shveta and nila are seldom available and pitta is rare. As pitta variety is endangered and abundantly available rakta variety is used commonly in medicine and it is called as flame of the forest. In Nighantu, many drugs have been described in detail by giving different synonyms and their properties and uses. The synonyms of palash which are found in most of nighantu have described the properties of palash as tikta and kashaya rasa, virya ushna but flower of Palash is sheet in nature. The fruits is laghu ushna and used in prameha, arsha, krimi and vatakaphaj dosha, according to Bhavprakash Nighantu.

Vernacular names of palash
English- flame of forest, bastard teak, Hindi- Dhak, palas, Assmis- Palash, Sanskrit- Palash, kimshuk, vakrapushpa, raktapushpa, Bengali- palas, palash, gaccha, Gujarati- khakara, khakda, khakhado, khakhar, khakar, kesuda, Kannada- muttagamara, muttug, muttulu,
Konkani- palash, Punjabi- chichara, dhak, palash Tamil- palashmaram

Botaniacal classification

Kingdom - Plantae  
Subkingdom - Angiosperm  
Superdivision - Eudicots  
Division - Rosid  
Order - Fables  
Family - Fabaceae  
Genus - Butea  
Species - B.monosperma

Samhita Era

Charak samhita: In Charak samhita, Palash in not described in mahakashay. But it is mentioned in sutra, chikitsa and sidha sthan for treating the diseases like arsha, atisar etc.

Sushrut samhita; in Sushrut samhita Palash is described rodhradi, muskakadi, ambasthadi and nyagrodhadi gana.

Kashyapa samhita: in this Samhita kwath of Palash is use in give mukti from sheetputana grah for balak.

Ashtang hridaya: Palash is mentioned in rodhradi, muskakadi, Ambasthadi and nyagrodhadi gana.

Nighantu Era

In Nighantu, many drugs has been described in detail by giving different synonyms and their properties and uses. The synonyms of Palash which are found in a most of Nighantu are Brahmavriksha, Smidvara and vatapotha etc. Many of the Nighantu have been described the properties of of Palash. i.e., the rasa of palash tikta and kashaya and virya ushna but flower of Palash is sheet in nature. The fruit is laghu and ushna and used in prameha, Arsha, Krimi, according to Bhavprakash nighantu, while in nighantu adarsha, the rasa of Palash is katu, tikta, kashaya, virya ushna, vipak katu.

Shvitra

All skin disorder in Ayurveda is placed under the name of Kushtha. In Ayurveda, shvitra is considered as one of the varieties of kushtha. Shvitra is an idiopathic acquired as well as congenital circumscribed. depigmenter condition which is characterized by the appearance of white on the skin. The stigma associated with shvitra dates back to ancient time. The symptoms of shvitra as described in Ayurveda can be envisaged in vitiligo, a pigmentation disorder of skin.

Charak samhita:

Acharya Charaka mentioned that kilasa is mostly tridoshaj and is of three types darun, arun, and shvitra, the disease spot is red, coppery and white, and the morbidity is located in rakta, mansa and meda respectively.

Sushrut samhita:

Shvitra is also a form of kushtha itself. It is three types those caused by vata, pitta, and kapha. Shvitra is different from kushtha in the sense that the former is located only in skin and is free from discharge. By vata it is round, reddish, rough and dusty; by pitta it is like lotus leaf and with generalized
burning sensation while by *kapha* it is white, unctuous, thick and itching of them, that with contiguous patches, situated in end parts and having red hairs and also burnt with fire is incurable.

**Ashtanghridaya:**

The aetiology of *shvitra*, *kilasa* and *darun* is similar to that of *kushtha*. However, these have no discharge, their origin is consider to be from the three *dosha vata, pitta, kapha* and their location is in the three *dhatu rakta, mansa and meda*.

**Classification of Shvitra:**

1. According to *Dosha-*
   
   *Shvitra* can be categorized on the basis of *dosh* variance or by involvement of *dosha* in the pathology or the dominancy of the *Dosha*. *Acharya Vagbhata* was mentioned them as.
   
   **Vataja**
   
   **Pittaja**
   
   **Kaphaja**

2. According to *Dhatugatva*:
   
   *Acharya Charaka* has mentioned three types of disease on the basis of *dhatugatva*.
   
   **Darun : Rakta Dhatugata**
   
   **Arun : Mansa Dhatugata**
   
   **Kilas : Meda Dhatugata**

3. According to *Sadhyasadhytava*:
   
   *Asadhya-*
   
   *Acharya Charaka* mentioned that, *shvitra* which is undemarcated mutually, extensive, having red hairs and arisen since many years is not curable.

   **Sadhya-*
   
   *Shvitra* is curable which has no red hairs, is thin, pale, and not so old and raised upwards in the middle, this type of *shvitra* is curable.

**Nidan of Shvitra:**

The different types of etiological factors described in different texts. In *Ayurvedic* classics no separate description on etiology is available. So the etiology of *kushtha* is to be taken into consideration to understand the aetiopathogenesis of *Shvitra*. *Acharya Charak* specifies, *virudhhahar* is the main factor and bad behavior is an additional factor of *Kushtha*. But in reference to *shvitra* specific bad behaviour and *purvajanmakrita karma* specify for *shvitra*.

**Samprapti of Shvitra:**

*Shvitra* is described along with *Kushtha* and the *Samprapti of Kushtha* should be accepted as *Samprapti of shvitra*. *Shvitra* is a disease where there is involvement of all three *dosha* like *vata, pitta, kapha* and *dushya* are *twaka, lasika, raka and mansa* and they are also vitiated due to vitiated *dosha*. After *Nidana sevan* these *dosha* circulate in the body by mean of blood vessels. Then they engorge in specific *dushya* and vitiate them also. The vitiated *dosha* which situated in the *dushya* are generating different type of *shvitra* depending upon the degree of *dosha* involvement, and also involvement of *dushya* that is *rasa, raka, mansa* and
meda. So in same way they produced variety of symptoms. There may be also variation in colour, site, shape, border of patches.

**Discussions**

Shvitra is hypopigmentation disorder of skin, in which shukla varna appears on the skin. Acharya Charaka stated that, shukla varna comes under the vikruta varna. Shvitra is described along with Kushtha and the samprapti of Kushtha should be accepted as samprapti of shvitra according to Acharya Vagbhat, Shvitra is a disease, in which involvement of all three doshas and four duskyas as rasa, rakta, mansa and meda, they are also vitiating due to vitiating dosha. Acharya Vagbhata mentioned that, kashay rasa has karma of rakta vishodhan, kleda vishoshan and twakprasadan, and it also clears the strotorodh. so palash could be helping in rakta vishodhan, it means purifies the rakta. Kleda vishoshan i.e. absorbs the kleda from skin. It acts as twakprasadan, and it clears the strotorodh means clear the channels of skin. Kashaya rasa also restore the normal colour of skin. And also acts as kaphapittaghna.

**Conclusion**

In the above light, on the basis of different samhita palash could be helpful in shvitra. Even palash has the properties which is might be effective in many diseases.

**References**

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