A critical review on two types of Laghupanchamula

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Introduction

Plants have been in use since times immemorial as food, fodder, and medicine. The use of plants as medicine is well documented in Vedic compendia – the Rigveda and the Atharvaaveda. During the Vedic period (6000 BC), plants were mostly used as a single drug, i.e., Arka,[1] Khadira, [2] Durva, [3] Apamarga, [4] and Prshniparni. [5] The literature also has reference regarding grouping, i.e., Dashavriksha in Atharvaaveda; Sayana has clarified that it includes Paalasha, Udumbara, etc. [6]

Initially, the tradition of single-drug therapy since the Vedic times has declined through the ages; currently, rational groups of drugs have been formed under the heading Mishraka Varga (group of drugs). On comprehensive review, it was found that a good number of groups are enumerated in Ayurvedic classics, with separate chapters dedicated to each. These groups are named as Mahakashaya [7] or Gana [8] or Skandha. [9] Fifty Maharakshayas, which are ascribed in Charaka Samhita, are named according to the action they have. On the other hand, in Sushruta Samhita, Gana are named on the first drug of the every Gana and the action has been mentioned as Dosh Pratyanika (against Dosa) and Vyadhi Pratyanika (against Vyadhi). Furthermore, in those groups, Niyatavaya (definite number of drugs) or Aniyatavaya (indefinite number of drugs) are also included. [10]

In fact, although these groups are enumerated for the common person, a person with more in-depth knowledge can add or remove drugs that are appropriate or not appropriate according to Dosa and Vyadhi by Yukti (justification) as per requirement. [11] Hence, emphasis has been given on the use of all or a few drugs according to requirement. In due course of time, a few of the groups became very popular, namely Triphala, [12] Trikatu, [13] Dashamula, [14] and are still in use.

Among these, Dashamula is one of the original compound formulations still widely in use. Dashamula consists of Brihatpanchamula (i.e., greater five root drugs) and Kaniyapanchamula (i.e., smaller five root drugs). [15] Drugs of Kaniyapanchamula are Trikantaka, Brihatibiva (Brihati, Kantakari), and Prithakaparnyo (Shalaparni, Prshniparni). Kaniyapanchamula of Sushruta Samhita is reported by other names in various classics as Vidartayandhapanchamula, [17] Hiravpanchamula, [18] Khuddapanchamula, [19] Kanishthapanchamula, [20] and Laghupanchamula. [21] Analysis of the drugs of Laghupanchamula show that four drugs, namely Shalaparni, Prshniparni, Brihati, and Kantakari, are common to both the groups; however, the fifth drug is either Gokshura or Eranda. Thus, it is obvious that two traditions are clearly seen regarding the contents of Laghupanchamula.

Abstract

A group of five roots of small plants i.e., Shalaparni, Prshniparni, Bhhati, Kantakari and Gokshura or Eranda is known as Laghupanchamula under Mishraka Varga (group of drugs). It is used as such or with Mahat Panchamula i.e., Bilva, Gambhari, Shyonaka, Agramanthena and Patala, constituting Dashamula, a well recognized and popular Ayurvedic preparation or as an ingredient of different dosage forms. Classical texts of Ayurveda differs regarding components of this Mishraka Varga. Four out of five drugs of Laghupanchamula are similar in all the Ayurvedic texts, but either Gokshura or Eranda is considered as the fifth drug. So a comprehensive review of Veda, Samhita Grantha, Cikitsa Grantha and Nighantus, with regards to synonyms, contents, Guna- Karma, origin of variation in contents and possible thought behind two kinds of Laghupanchamula, to throw light for rational use of either Eranda or Gokshura under Laghupanchamula was conducted. It was observed that both the traditions were in practice however Acharya Kashyapa and Ravigupta were in view of Eranda as a fifth drug of Laghupanchamula where as Acharya Charaka, Sushruta, Yogabhatta, Yogaratnakara and Chakradatta are in favour of Gokshura. Infact, the variation in content depends on the need i.e. Dasha, Dushya and Vyadhi.

Key words: Brihatpanchamula, Eranda, Gokshura, Laghupanchamula
Therefore, a comprehensive review of Ayurvedic classics, with the objective of determining the rationality of selecting either Gokshura or Eranda, as an ingredient of Laghupanchamula, was undertaken.

Materials and Methods

A chronological review of all available Ayurvedic classics have been carried out, i.e., Charaka Samhita (1000 B.C. to 4th Century A.D.), Sushruta Samhita (1000 B.C. to 5th Century A.D.), Kashyapa Samhita (6th Century B.C.), Ashtanga Sangraha (6th Century A.D.), Ashtanga Hridaya (7th Century A.D.), Chikitsa Granthas, i.e., Siddhasara Samhita (7th Century A.D.), Chakradatta (11th Century A.D.), Yogaratnaka (11–12th Century A.D.), Vangasena (12th Century A.D.), Bhashyaratnavali (18th Century A.D.), and Nighantu (18th Century A.D.), and Madanapala (11–12th Century A.D.), Raja (18th Century A.D.), and Shivdasasen (16th Century A.D.) were considered in the Ayurveda Samhita, i.e., neither too hot nor too cold in potency and pacify all the three doshas. The word Laghupanchamula is clearly mentioned in Chikitsa, Chikitsasthana, and Siddhasara Nighantu (7th Century A.D.), Ashtanga Nighantu (8th Century A.D.), Dhanvantari Nighantu (10–15th Century A.D.), Shodhala Nighantu (12th Century A.D.), Madanapala Nighantu (14th Century A.D.), Kavyadeva Nighantu (15th Century A.D.), Bhavaprakasha Nighantu (16th Century A.D.), Raja Nighantu (17th Century A.D.), Shaligrama Nighantu (19th Century A.D.), Priya Nighantu (20th Century A.D.), and all relevant information regarding Laghupanchamula was gathered. Simultaneous views of commentators like Chakrapandita (11th Century A.D.), Dalhana (12th Century A.D.), Hemadri (13–14th Century A.D.), and Shidvasasen (15th Century A.D.) were also considered to make the picture more clear regarding two types of Laghupanchamula. The information was critically reviewed and the rationale behind the variation in the content of Laghupanchamula was derived.

Observations

In Charaka Samhita, the word Laghupanchamula as such has not appeared; rather the drugs of Laghupanchamula are mentioned under a single group, i.e., Shvayathubara Mahakashaya; the drugs are Kantakarika, Brihati, Shalaparni, Prishniparni, and Gokshura. In the same chapter, under Angamardaprasamana Mahakashaya, the first four drugs, i.e., Vidarigandha, Prishniparni, Brihati, and Kantakarika, are present whereas the fifth drug is Eranda. In Chikitsasthana, Vidarigandhapanchamula (which consist of Vidarigandha, Brihati, Prishniparni, Nidgadhka, and Shvadmshta) is mentioned in Panchamula as an ingredient of Brihmarasayana. At other place in Chikitsasthana, either group alone as such or with the drugs of Brihatpanchamula, is included in many compound formulations, a few of them being Mahakalyanaka Gherita, Tala, Dashamuladi Gherita, Mustadi Churna, and Tala indicated in Apsamara, Visarpa, Guda, Kshtha, and Vrana, respectively. Dridhabala, who redacted Charaka Samhita, mentioned Vardhamanaka along with Shalaparni, Prishniparni, Brihati, and Kantakarika for Basti. It is to be noted that before this, all the five ingredients of Brihatpanchamula have been included for Basti. This indicates that Dridhabala was in favor of including Eranda in lieu of Gokshura or the combination was the most popular in his time.

In Sushruta Samhita, Kaniya and Brihatpanchamula have been mentioned in successive verses. The drugs of Kaniyapanchamula are Trikantaka, Brihadivaya (Brihati, Kantakari), and Prithakaparnyo (Shalaparni, Prishniparni). In the next line, the properties of Kaniyapanchamula are also ascribed, i.e., Kashaya, Tikta, and Madhura in Rasa as having Vataguna, Pittasama, Brimhana, and Balavardhana karma. In Cikitsasthana, this group has been prescribed in various dosage forms, i.e., Kashaya, Shhira, Taila, and Khetra (in Vrana, Bhagna, Vatavyadhi, and Arsha, respectively.

In both Ashtanga Sangraha and Ashtanga Hridaya, the five drugs of Laghupanchamula are grouped under Hrisvapanchamula and its properties are Madhura Rasa and Madhura Vipaka; neither Atishita nor Ativushna and Sarvavishshata by its action i.e.neither too hot nor too cold in potency and pacify all the three doshas. In Chikitsasthana of both the texts, various formulations of Hrisvapanchamula are mentioned such as Ghrita, Khetra, and Taila for Shvasa-Hikka, Shvasa, and Kshtha, respectively.

In Kashyapa Samhita, a compound formulation has been prescribed consisting of Khuddakapanchamula (without Eranda) along with Kala and Katavanga for Vatatisara.

Other Chikitsa Granthas such as Chakradatta, Yogrataukara, and Bhashyaratnavali have mentioned Gokshura as one of the ingredients of Laghupanchamula.

However, in Siddhasara Samhita, Eranda is clearly mentioned in Kanishthapanchamula with Brimhana and Vatapittaguna karma.

While reviewing the views of the commentators, it is observed that Chakrapandita, in his Bhanumati commentary of Sushruta Samhita, accepted Eranda in place of Gokshura in Laghupanchamula and stated that Charaka accepts Gokshura, Yadavaji Trikamji Acharya, in the edition of Sushruta Samhita with Dalhana commentary, has also reported that Eranda was present in places of Gokshura in one manuscript that was written in palm leaves. Hemadri, in the Ayurveda Rasayana commentary of Ashtanga Hridaya, reported that Sushruta includes Eranda in place of Gokshura in Laghupanchamula. Shivadasasena, in Tatvavacandraka commentary of Chakradatta, wrote that Sushruta accepts Eranda whereas Charaka accepts Gokshura as one of the constituents of Laghupanchamula.

In Nighantu, i.e., Ashtanga, Dhanvantari, Shodhala, Madanapala, Kavyadeva, Bhavaprakasha, Raja, Shaligrama, and Priya Nighantu, the five drugs of Laghupanchamula mentioned are Shalaparni, Prishniparni, Brihati, Kantakari, and Gokshura, except in Shvastha Nighantu where Eranda is included as one of the constituents of Vidarigandhadi panchamula.

Discussion

The word Laghupanchamula as such is not referred to in ancient Ayurvedic classics, i.e., Charaka Samhita and Sushruta Samhita. However, in Ashtanga Sangraha, and Ashtanga Hridaya, it is mentioned as a component of many compound formulations. In Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Kashyapa Samhita, and Siddhasara Samhita, Laghupanchamula was known by the name of Vidarigandhadi Panchamula, Kaniyapanchamula, Khuddakapanchamula, and Kanishthapanchamula, respectively. All the above terms indicate the habit of plants of this group, i.e., either herb (Shalaparni, Prishniparni, Brihati, Kantakari, and Gokshura) or shrub (Eranda).
It is worth mentioning here that Acharya Charaka named this group as Vidarigandhadi Panchamula, based on the first drug Vidarigandha (Shalaparni). Furthermore, in Charaka Samhita under Angamardaprasamhana Mahakasyaya, Eranda along with other four drugs of Laghupanchamula except Gokshura has been mentioned. In other texts such as Siddhisthana under Basti Prakarana, two kinds of Basti have been described; in the first one, five drugs of Brihat Parshamula are present and in the second one four drugs of Laghupanchamula – Shalaparni, Prishniparni, Brihatayu (Brihati, Kantakari) with Eranda – have been mentioned.[52] It signifies that Eranda has been used in place of Gokshura by Dridhabala for pacification of Vata by Basti Chikitsa.

The other reason for mentioning the two kinds may be the availability of these two types of manuscripts of Sushruta Samhita. In one manuscript, Laghupanchamula includes Shalaparni, Prishniparni, Brihati, Kantakari, and Gokshura,[53] whereas the other favors Eranda in place of Gokshura.[14] Hence, Hemadri, in Ayurveda Rasayana commentary,[55] and Shiwadasasen, in Tatvacandrika commentary,[56] have mentioned that Sushruta accepts Eranda and Charaka accepts Gokshura as one of the components of Laghupanchamula. Dalhana, the renowned commentator of Sushruta Samhita, accepts Gokshura and further described that some scholars considered Eranda in the place of Gokshura.[57] In Kashyapa Samhita, there is no separate description of the group; however, while describing the treatment of Vata, Kashyapa mentioned that here Khuddakapanchamula without Eranda should be considered,[59] which indicates toward Eranda as a content of Khuddakapanchamula, i.e., Laghupanchamula. The clear replacement of Gokshura by Eranda is found in both Siddhasara Samhita[61] and Saushruta Nighantu.[58]

Thus, it is obvious that two traditions (Laghupanchamula with either Gokshura or Eranda) prevailed with regard to treatment of various ailments. The first tradition – as seen in Charaka Samhita – was followed by most of the Chikitsa Granthas; Nighantu includes Gokshura as the content of Laghupanchamula. The second tradition was reported by Acharya Yadhavji in a manuscript of Sushruta Samhita written in Yada Patra (palm leaves). Kashyapa Samhita, Siddhasara Samhita, and Saushruta Nighantu accept Eranda in Laghupanchamula. The other four drugs are common to both the traditions.

The other important aspect of the two traditions seems that they were formulated in accordance with the properties responsible for varied therapeutic responses. This may be analyzed by considering the properties of Gokshura and Eranda individually. Gokshura has Ushna Veerya[58] and Madhura Vipaka[59] and is ascribed as Mutrakrachchchha Aniharanama,[60] whereas Eranda has Ushna Veerya[60] and Vrichya Vataharaanam.[60] Properties. Although both are Vata Shamaka, Eranda has the added advantage of being Vrichya (nutritive to Dhatu). Dhatuhara and Marga varana are two well-known causes of Vata Prakopa,[61] therefore, to treat Dhatuharyajanya Vata Prakopa (vitiation of Vata due to improper nourishment of various Dhatu), Laghupanchamula having Eranda would be more beneficial. On the other hand, if Mutravaha Srotas (urinary system) is affected, and in Apana Vayu Vikriti group having Gokshura is much more beneficial. In fact, this seems to be the rational use of Gokshura or Eranda in Laghupanchamula.

**Conclusion**

Five drugs in a single group have been in use since ancient times to date. This group is mentioned under various names, i.e., Vidarigandhadi in Charaka Samhita, Kanyapanchamula in Sushruta Samhita, Khuddakapanchamula in Kashyapa Samhita, and Kanishkapanchamula in Siddhasara Samhita. The word Laghupanchamula is not found Charaka Samhita, Sushruta Samhita, Kashyapa Samhita, and Siddhasara Samhita. In Ashtanga Sangastra, a new name, “Laghupanchamula,” was firstly coined, followed by other classics. The term Kaniya, Khuddaka, Kanishtha, and Lagha indicate the same meaning, i.e., small, which signifies the habit of the plants (herb or small shrub) under the group. The term Vidarigandhadi given by Charaka provided information regarding the first drug of the group, Vidarigandha (Shalaparni). Four drugs (Shalaparni, Prishniparni, Brihati, and Kantakari) are considered in all. Samhita, Chikitsa Granthas, and Nighantu; however, the fifth drug is either Gokshura or Eranda. Eranda is clearly mentioned in place of Gokshura by Siddhasara Samhita, Saushruta Nighantu, and in a manuscript of Sushruta Samhita edited by Jadavji. Other manuscripts like Samhita, Chikitsa Granthas, and Nighantu accepted Gokshura under Laghupanchamula.

Six drugs, Shalaparni, Prishniparni, Brihati, Kantakari, Gokshura, and Eranda, gave rise to two types of Laghupanchamula. Inclusion of either Gokshura or Eranda may be due to the clinical experience/observations of the concerned authorities, i.e., when Vata and simultaneously Dhatuposhana need to be pacified; Eranda is being considered due to its best Vrshya and Vatathara property. On the other hand, if pacification of Vata is required, and specifically for treatment of urinary tract diseases, then Gokshura, due to its best Mutrakrichahara property, is being considered in place of Eranda.

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हिन्दी सारांश
लघुपंचमूल के दो प्रकारों का समालोचनात्मक अध्ययन
शिवानी घिल्डियाल, विनोद कुमार जोशी

घिल्डियाल और जोशी ने लघुपंचमूल के दो प्रकारों का समालोचनात्मक अध्ययन किया है। लघुपंचमूल में बर्णित चार द्रव्य सभी आयुर्विदिक ग्रंथों में एक से ही परंतु पंचम द्रव्य एरण्ड या गोकुर्य है। प्रस्तुत लेख में लघुपंचमूल से सम्बंधित महत्वपूर्ण तथ्य जैसे पर्याय, अवयव, गुणकर्म, अवयवों में भिन्नता का प्रारंभ तथा कारण को प्रकाशित किया गया है। जिससे कि लघुपंचमूल के अंतर्गत गोकुर्य या एरण्ड का प्रयोग किया जा सके।

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