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Oroxylum indicum: Ethnobotany, phytochemistry and therapeutic uses

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Abstract

Oroxylum indicum, commonly known as Tetu and belong to Bignoniaceae family. It is used to treat several human ailments since ancient times. It is used to treat the various diseases such as; urticaria, jaundice, asthma, sore throat, laryngitis, hoarseness, gastralgia, diarrhea, dysentery, infantile, erythema measles, etc. It is also having potential to treat against SARS-CoV-2 (COVID-19) infection in humans. Studies also report that species having the various functional properties like; antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, anticancer, antimicrobial, anti-arthritis etc. In this review, it has been an attempt to explore the ethnobotany, phytochemistry and therapeutic potential of this medicinally important tree.

Keywords: *Oroxylum indicum*, ethnobotany, phytochemistry, therapeutic, medicinal plant

Introduction

Oroxylum indicum is also synonymously called as *Bignonia indica* L. and *Calosanthus indicablume*. Commonly known as the tree of Damocles (English); Sonapatha or Shyonak (Hindi); Tentu (Gujarati); Aralu (Sanskrit); Davamadak (Konkani) and belonging to Bignoniaceae family (Jagetia, 2021) [13]. It is an important medicinal tree species which is used by humans from ancient times to treat various diseases. *Oroxylum indicum* is a small to medium-sized, lanky, soft-wooded and fast-growing deciduous tree that can grow up to 8–15 m tall and its trunk is about 40 cm in diameter in general.

Morphology

Bark of the plant is light greyish brown in color and soft, spongy in texture with corky lenticels. The flowers are abundant in numbers, reddish purple outside and pale, pinkish-yellow within which release a strong, fetid odour to attract pollinators and they form massive seed pods (fruits) that fall down from bare branches (Barchung *et al.*, 2018) [2]. Fruits are woody, winged, large, flat and sword-shaped. The seeds present within fruit are round, flat and thin with broad silvery papery wings except at the base. The leaves are pinnately compound which generally grow up to 3–10 cm long with 2–4 leaflet pairs and they are evergreen (Nik Salleh *et al.*, 2020) [25].

Taxonomical Classification

Kingdom	Plantae
Division	Magnoliophyta
Class	Magnoliopsida
Division	Lamiales
Family	Bignoniaceae
Genus	<i>Oroxylum</i>
Species	<i>indicum</i>

Distribution

Oroxylum indicum is widely distributed throughout Asian regions, including India, Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, China, Bhutan, Taiwan, and Japan. It is native to the Indian sub-continent in the Himalayan foothills up to a height of 1000–1200 m. It is visible in the forest biome of Manasa National Park in Assam, India (Sowjanya *et al.*, 2019) [35].

Medicinal uses

Natural products have played an essential role in the healthcare of humans since their evolution and keep on to play an important role even in the most modern state-of-the-art therapeutic era. *Oroxylum indicum* has been used to treat several human ailments since earliest period. Different parts of Tetu are used for human healthcare traditionally and in Ayurveda, where it is one of the most essential ingredients of Brahma Rasayana, Dashmularishta, Dhanawantara Ghrita, Amritarishta, Narayana Taila, Dantyadyarista, and Chyavanprasha (Balkrishna *et al.*, 2005; Warriar *et al.*, 1995; Dinda *et al.*, 2015; Jagetia, 2021) ^[1, 38, 10, 13]. Ever part of *Oroxylum indicum*, bark, leaves, fruit, root, stem, flower and seeds are reported for wide biological activities and has already been useful in corresponding medicine to treat human diseases (Dev *et al.*, 2010; Deka *et al.*, 2013) ^[9, 8]. The experimental studies have revealed that active constituents of *Oroxylum indicum* including oroxylin A, baicalein, and

chrysin have the potential to act against the COVID-19 infection of SARS-CoV-2 in humans (Jagetia, 2021) ^[13].

Pattern of use by tribes

Oroxylum indicum are used for the treatment of various ailments is one of the parts of the local tribal communities' such as Rabha, Garo, Khasi, and Jaintia in Meghalaya (India); Kuki, Mao, Maram in Manipur (India) (Barchung *et al.*, 2018) ^[2]. *Oroxylum indicum* root bark paste is orally administered to treat dysentery, diarrhea jaundice, and rheumatism by the Naga tribe in India (Jamir *et al.*, 2010) ^[14]. A glass of bark decoction with two spoons of sugar is often given to cure jaundice by the halam tribe of northeast India (Das *et al.*, 2012) ^[6]. Seeds and bark of *Oroxylum indicum* are given in conditions of pneumonia, respiratory troubles, and fever by different tribes in India (Patil *et al.*, 2008; Panghal *et al.*, 2010) ^[28, 26]. Different ethnomedicinal used by different tribes communities are described in Table 1.

Table 1: Ethnomedicinal uses of *Oroxylum indicum*

Plant Part	Ethnomedicinal Uses	Reference
Fruits	Kill crabs in the paddy fields, served as a vegetable, most important ingredients of Brahma Rasayana, Dashmularishta, Dhanawantara Ghrita, Amritarishta, Narayana Taila, Dantyadyarista, and Chyavanprasha, to improve appetite, treat throat infection, bronchitis, heart disorders, leukoderma and piles	Jagetia, 2021 ^[13] ; Dinda <i>et al.</i> , 2015 ^[10] ; Khare <i>et al.</i> , 2004 ^[16] ; Nadkarni, 1992 ^[23] ; Chopra <i>et al.</i> , 2002 ^[5] ; Drury <i>et al.</i> , 2010 ^[11]
Seeds	Treat throat complications and hypertension, digestive and purgative, treat boils and wounds, powdered seeds are given to induce conception in women, paste made from grounded seeds with fire soot is applied to the neck to treat tonsillitis, inflammations, skin diseases, sprains, and rheumatism	Singh <i>et al.</i> , 2002; Jagetia, 2021 ^[13]
Twigs	Kill crabs in the paddy fields	Jagetia, 2021 ^[13]
Leaves	Snakebite and to treat ulcers, headache, and enlarged spleen	Lalrinzuali <i>et al.</i> , 2018 ^[20] ; Khare, <i>et al.</i> , 2004 ^[16] ; Nadkarni, <i>et al.</i> , 1982 ^[23]
Flowers	Served as a vegetable, grown as an ornamental plant	Warriar <i>et al.</i> , 1995 ^[38]
Roots	Aphrodisiac, antidiabetic, astringent, antiarthritic, carminative, diaphoretic, constipating, anthelmintic, febrifuges, diuretic, digestive, and expectorant	Kirtikar <i>et al.</i> , 2001 ^[17] , Paranjpe <i>et al.</i> , 2005 ^[27] , Dinda <i>et al.</i> , 2015, ^[10] Warriar <i>et al.</i> , 1995 ^[38]
Root bark	Digestive tonic, treat nasopharyngeal cancer, stomatitis, and tuberculosis, treat dysentery, diarrhea jaundice, and rheumatism	Jamir <i>et al.</i> , 2010 ^[14] ; Bhattacharje <i>et al.</i> , 2005 ^[3] ; Khare <i>et al.</i> , 2004 ^[16]
Stem bark	Kill maggots on cattle wounds, stomach disorders	Lalrinzuali <i>et al.</i> , 2015 ^[19] ; Warriar <i>et al.</i> , 1995 ^[38] ; Nakahara <i>et al.</i> , 2002 ^[24] ; Lalrinzuali <i>et al.</i> , 2018 ^[20] ; Rout <i>et al.</i> , 2009 ^[30]

Pharmacological Activities

Oroxylum indicum has shown various pharmacological activities in various study systems of vitro and in vivo under the different extracts. Antioxidant: Antioxidant property found in various plant parts such as; Fruits (ethanol and water extract), Stem bark (50% aqueous ethanol), leaves; seed; root (Methanol). Antimicrobial: Root Bark (Ethyl acetate and Methanol), Stem bark (Ethyl Acetate), Anti-inflammatory:

Leaves (Aqueous), Stem bark (Aqueous and alcoholic extracts). Anticancer: Fruit, Stem bark (Ethanol, Aqueous, Methanol). Anti-mutagenicity: Fruit (Methanol). Immunomodulatory: Root Bark (*n*-Butanol). Gastroprotective: Root bark (Alcoholic and *n*- Butanol), Anti-hepatotoxic: Leaves (Ethanol) (Table 2) (Barchung *et al.*, 2018) ^[2].

Table 2: Pharmacological properties of *Oroxylum indicum*

Plant parts	Functional properties	Reference
Fruit	Antioxidant	Yan <i>et al.</i> , 2011 ^[39]
	Anticancer	Roy <i>et al.</i> , 2007 ^[31]
	Antimutagenicity	Nakahara K, <i>et al.</i> , 2002 ^[24]
Seed	Antioxidant	Yan <i>et al.</i> , 2011 ^[39]
Leaves	Antioxidant	Mishra <i>et al.</i> , 2010 ^[22]
	Anti-inflammatory	Laupattarakasem <i>et al.</i> , 2003 ^[21]
	Anti-hepato-toxic	Tenpe <i>et al.</i> , 2009 ^[36]
Stem	Antioxidant	Mishra <i>et al.</i> , 2010 ^[22]
	Antimicrobial	Kumar <i>et al.</i> , 2011 ^[18]
	Anti-inflammatory	Tenpe <i>et al.</i> , 2009 ^[36]
Stem Bark	Antioxidant	Gupta <i>et al.</i> , 2008 ^[12]

Root bark	Antimicrobial	Kumar <i>et al.</i> , 2011 ^[18]
	Anti-inflammatory	Tenpe <i>et al.</i> , 2009 ^[36]
	Anticancer	Brahma <i>et al.</i> , 2011 ^[4]
	Immunomodulatory	Zaveri M, <i>et al.</i> , 2006 ^[40]
	Antimicrobial	Uddin <i>et al.</i> , 2003 ^[37]
	Gastroprotective	Zaveri M, <i>et al.</i> , 2007 ^[41]

Phytochemicals

Oroxylum indicum is usually known to present its diverse bioactive compounds. Various biological activities reported in different parts of the *O. indicum* plant are mediated by a broad range of secondary metabolites, such as flavonoids, glycosides, alkaloids, tannins, terpenoids, saponin, phenols, quinines, etc. are found from the extraction of different parts of the plant (Table 3). Among them, flavonoids are the major storage components of *O. indicum* which could be found in

almost all parts of the plant. Among all of these flavonoids, baicalein is the most abundantly found and dominant active compound of the *O. indicum*. Numerous researches conducted on phytochemical investigations clearly demonstrated the abundance of baicalein isolated from various parts of this plant including the stem barks, root barks, leaves, fruits and also seeds. The secondary metabolites are not associated with the growth and development of the species (Barchung *et al.*, 2018)^[2].

Table 3: Different phytoconstituents detected in the *Oroxylum indicum*

Plant Part	Phytoconstituents	Reference
Stem bark	Phenolics, flavonoids, saponins Alkaloids, Tannins, saponins, sterols, phenols, fats, oils, glycosides,	Kalaivani <i>et al.</i> , 2009 ^[15] ; Samatha <i>et al.</i> , 2012 ^[32] ; Das <i>et al.</i> , 2014 ^[6] ; Lahrnzuali <i>et al.</i> , 2015 ^[19]
Stem and root bark	Glycosides, terpenoids phenols, alkaloids,	Radhika <i>et al.</i> , 2011 ^[29]
Root bark	Flavonoids, alkaloids, glycosides, tannins, sterols, phenols, lignins, saponins, fats, oils	Samatha <i>et al.</i> , 2012 ^[32]
Seeds	Alkaloids, flavonoids, tannins, glycosides, sterols, phenols, saponins, fats, oils	Samatha <i>et al.</i> , 2012 ^[32]
Tender leaves	Phlobatannins, flavonoids, phenols and tannins, glycosides	Satya Eswari <i>et al.</i> , 2018 ^[33]

Conclusions

Oroxylum indicum is used in traditional and Ayurvedic systems of medicine to treat numerous human diseases from ancient times to still current pandemic saturation of COVID-19. In ancient times is use as various traditional methods by different tribes communities. It is useful in various Ayurvedic products as one of the important ingredient. The scientific studies of *Oroxylum indicum* has well-known for its analgesic, anti-inflammatory, anthelmintic, antimicrobial, antidiabetic, anti-obesity, hepatoprotective, cardioprotective, gastroprotective, anticancer, and wound healing activities. *Oroxylum indicum* is also known for the presence of various phytoconstituents i.e. flavonoids, glycosides, alkaloids, tannins, terpenoids, saponin, phenols, quinines, etc.

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