

A Review on Pharmacological Activities and Medicinal Properties of *Vitex negundo*

HPIJ Kaldera^{1#}, SL Wewalwala, and SK Rasingolla²

¹Department of Basic Principles, Gampaha Wickramarachchi Ayurveda Institute, University of Kelaniya, Yakkala, Sri Lanka

²Department of Cikitsa, Gampaha Wickramarachchi Ayurveda Institute, University of Kelaniya, Yakkala, Sri Lanka
#inoka.jayamali@gmail.com

Abstract— *Vitex negundo* which belongs to Verbenaceae family is a commonly used plant in both Ayurveda and traditional medicine system in Sri Lanka. It is also known as the 'Nika' in Sinhala and 'Nirgundi' in Sanskrit. This review aims to provide an overview on Pharmacological activities and medicinal properties of *Vitex negundo*. The information is collected from authentic Ayurveda texts, scientific journals and electronic media. According to Ayurvedic texts, leaves and roots of *Vitex negundo* are mostly used. According to Ayurveda pharmacological properties of *Vitex negundo* tikta, katu and kashaya in rasa, laghu and ruksha in guna, ushna in veerya and katu in vipaka exist. Other medicinal properties are kaphavatahara, shothahara, vrunashodhana, vrunaropana, keshya, janthugna, medya, kasahara, kushtagna, kandugna, jwaragna, balya, rasayana and chakshusya. Therapeutically it can be used for fever, ear diseases, skin diseases, diseases of the genito- urinary system and diseases of the respiratory system. Anti-inflammatory activity, Pain suppressing activity, Anti-histamine activity, Membrane stabilising activity, Antioxidant activity, Anti-itching activity, Anti-nephrotoxic activity, Antiradical and Anti-lipoperoxidative effects, Anxiolytic effect, Alpha-amylase inhibitory activity, Larvicidal activity, Anti-conulsant activity, Anti-nociceptive activity. Anti-bacterial activity and Anti-microbial activity of *Vitex negundo* have been scientifically proven. The present review attempts to encompass an up to date comprehensive literature analysis on *Vitex negundo* with respect to its pharmacological activities and medicinal properties.

Keywords— *Vitex negundo*, Pharmacological activities, medicinal properties

I. INTRODUCTION

The world is gradually seeking alternative solutions for the unsolved health hazards in the modern health promoting scenario in which the term 'herbal medicine' is playing a significant role. The Ayurveda or 'Science of Life' which is a well known and established system of medicine dated up to thousands of years is unforgettable

in that scenario since from the origin being the guardian of all living creatures against ailments.

In that system *Vitex negundo* Linn. (Will henceforth be referred to as Vn for sake of convenience) or 'Nika' in Sinhala, which belongs to family Verbenaceae is a very important herbal with a broad spectrum of pharmacological activities, medicinal properties and applications.

The name itself is giving a considerable justification about its significant in clinical practice. It is called *sindhuvāra* in Sanskrit for its ability of eliminating the inflammatory swellings (Jayasingheet *al*, 1985, p.243). As well as it is called *Nirguṇḍī* due to its ability of protecting the body against ailments (ibid.). *Sindhuvārikā*, *bhūtāveśī*, *nirguṇḍī*, *varada*, *sinduvara* are the synonyms given in *Vanavāsānighanduwa* (Dipankara, 1970, p.19). They have probably given by considering its pharmacological activity. In addition to the above the *Sarasvatīnighanduwa* has given *bhūtākeśī* and *indrāṇi* as its other synonyms (Gunasena, 1970, p.24).

Mostly the leaves, roots and barks of the plant have been using in both Ayurveda and indigenous medicine in Sri Lanka. It has been using both internally and externally with a broad spectrum of preparation methods viz. oil, decoctions, medicated smokes, fermentations and dressings etc.

II. METHODOLOGY

This review has done with an intention to provide an overview on Pharmacological activities and medicinal properties of Vn. The data were collected from Ayurveda authentic texts, scientific journals and through the electronic media. They were well documented, categorized, analysed under different sections and compared with each other.

III. MORPHOLOGY AND VARIETIES

"It is a small slender tree or shrub, branch lets quadrangular, finely pubescent; leaves opposite,