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A Literary Review on *Kustha (Saussurea lappa)*

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ABSTRACT

Kusta (Saussurealappa) is a well known perennial herb, globally used in many indigenous systems of medicine in many ailments. Different synonyms have been mentioned in various *samhitas* and *nighantus* for *Kusta* along with its *guna-karma*, properties and indications. Due to its remarkable medicinal value, the knowledge about the availability of the drug *Kusta* in ancient literatures is important for the further research studies. Hence, the present review aims to collect the preliminary documentations found in *Ayurvedic* literatures w.s.r.t *Nighantus*.

Key Words *Kusta, Saussurealappa, Ayurveda*

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INTRODUCTION

Amongst *Chikitsa Chatushpada* next to *Bhishak* is *Dravya* which should have the qualities like *Bahukalpam, Bahugunam* etc.. Without proper knowledge of *Dravya*, plan of *Chikitsa* is of no use. Hence to study or to understand about drug along with practical knowledge, *Aptavachan* is very important and essential. As *Ayurveda* is from the period of *Atharvaveda* hence, knowledge about the *Dravya* is also from the period of *Arthaveda*. Continued with *Samhita Kala*, then to *Nighantu Kala* and followed by the modern *Materia Medica*. Whereas *Nighantus* are the bridge between *Samhita Kala* and modern contemporary.

Nighantus may be defined as a glossary containing synonymous groups, the name of the

drugs, plants, animals, minerals or anything that is administered either as food or medicine to the human body. To understand precisely these glossaries are called as “*Ayurveda Nighantus*”. Thus it can be stated that knowledge of *Nighantu* is indispensable and very essential for a good physician.

Identification of plants during *Nighantu* period made by Lexico-graphic works like *Narhari Pandit, Madanpal, Bhavamishra* on medicinal plants. They have worked mainly on identification of plants by giving synonyms. Many new plants were added and emphasis was given on cultivation and propagation. Lexicographers compiled all the knowledge from *Vedas* and *Samhitas* and reshaped them.

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Nighantukaras adopted the identification techniques in general by the following factors:

1. On the basis of habitat and its habit
2. Historical importance
3. Peculiar characters seen in the plants
4. Resemblance of different plants with animals and birds
5. Usage of fruits and seed of plants for standards of weighing
6. On the basis floral appearance, color of plants, seed and flowers
7. On the basis of Latex produced by plants
8. On the basis of typical aromatic qualities
9. On the basis of number of leaves and typical characters of leaves.

Right from the *Vedickala* description of many drugs has been found among them *Kusta* is one of the important drug used in various human diseases. It is described in the *AlankarGrantha* as *VashikaranaDravya*. The present context is aimed to enlighten the description of the drug *Kusta*(*Saussurealappa*) belongs to family Asteraceae. The description of *Kusta* like its synonyms, *Guna-karma* and its properties along with wide range of indication found in Ayurvedic literatures w.s.r to *Nighantus* is going to be discussed.

1. In VedicKala-

In *Atharvaveda*, *Kusta* is mentioned as an important drug. It is in the view that in Himalaya *Kusta* was growing along with *Soma*¹(*Dravyagunavij* by P.V.Sharma Part IV P.51)

2. Samhitakala-

A) **ChrakaSamhita**- The drug *kusta* is mentioned under *Suthrasthana*, *Vimanastana*, *Chikitsa* and *Siddhisthana* for treatment of *Vatakapha* predominant diseases as well as mentioned the specific action in disorders of sperm(*Shukrashodhana*) and fat metabolism and described as the best drug among the drugs for *Abhanga* and *Upanaha*²(C.Su.25)

B) **SushrutaSamahita**-Mentioned under *Eladigana*(Sut.38.24) *Mustadigana*(Sut.38.54) and *Vata samana*³(Sut.39.65)

C) **AstangaSamgraha**-Mentioned under *Vatanasakpradeha*(AS.Su13.3), *Kasaswasa*⁴(AS.Ci.146)

D) **AstangaHridaya**-Mentioned in context of *Prameha pidika*⁵(AH.Ci45.2)

E) **SharangadarSamhita**-*Kusathadyataila* indicated as nasal drops for *Pratishaya*⁶.

3.Nighantukala

Kustah is very important *Dravya* use in Ayurveda since long time .it is used in Ayurveda in many diseased conditions. The description of *Kustha* in various *Nighantu* as:

1. KayadevaNighantu

In *KeyadevaNighantu* description of *Kusthais* mention under the *Aushadivarga*. In this *Nighantu* synonyms as well as property of *Kusthais* given .16 synonyms of *Kustha* are *Kapala*, *Palaka*, *Tvagdosha*, *Vapya*, *Utpala*, *Amaya*, *Ruk*, *Gada*, *Roga*, *Sama*, *Niruja*, *Ruja*, *Pariharya*, *Paribhadra*, , *Pribhavya*, and *Utpala*. *Kustha* has been said as *Tikta* , *Katu* and *Madhura* in *rasa* and *Laghu* in *Guna* and *Usna* in *Veerya* . It is indicated in

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*Shukralakarma, Vatarakta, Visha, Visarpa, Kushtha, Kasa and Kapha and Vata Vyadhi*⁷.

2. Dhanwantri Nighantu

In *Dhanwantri Nighantu* description of *Kusthais* mention under the *Chandanadi Varga*. In this *Nighantu* 11 synonyms of *Kustha* are described like *Roga, Agada, Vyadhi, Utpala, Pakala, Ruja, Vapya, Vaniraja, Rama, Kaubera and Paribhadra*. The property of *Kustha* has been said as *Katu* and *Tikta* in *rasa* and *Veerya* is *Usna*. It is indicated in *Kapha, Vata* and *Raktavikara, Tridosaj Visha, Kandu and Kushtha*⁸.

3. Bhavprakasha Nighantu

In *Bhavprakasha Nighantu* description of *Kusthais* mention under the *Haritkayadi Varga*. In this *Nighantu* synonyms as well as property of *Kustha* is given in detail. 4 synonyms of *Kustha* are *Rogahvaya, Vapya, Paribhavya and Utpala*. *Kustha* has been said as *Katu, Madhura and Tikta, Laghu and Usna*. It is therapeutic action as *Shukralakarma, Vatarakta, Visarpa, Kasa, Kushtha, and Kapha and Vata Vyadhi*⁹.

4. Nighantushesh

In *Nighantushesh* description of *Kustha* is mention under the *Gulmakhanda*. In this *Nighantu* only description of synonyms is found. Synonyms of *Kustha* are *Pakala, Rama, Vanira, Vapya, Utpala, Vaniraja, Paribhavya, Kourvyam and Vyadhi*¹⁰.

5. Madanpala Nighantu

In *Madanpala Nighantu* synonyms and *Guna-karma* of *Kusthais* mention under the *Abhyaadivarga*. Synonyms of *Kustha* in *Madanpala Nighantu* are *Rogahvaya, Divya, Kaubera, Paribhadra, Pariharya, Paribhavya and Utpala*. *Kustha* has been said as *Katu, Madhura and Tikta* in *rasa* and *Laghu* in *Guna* and *Usna* in *Veerya*. It is indicated in *Shukralakarma, Vatarakta, Visarpa, Kushtha, Kasa and Kapha and Vata Vyadhi*¹¹.

6. Raja Nighantu

In *Raja Nighantu* description of *Kustha* is mention under the *Chandanadi Varga*. In this *Nighantu* synonyms as well as property of *Kustha* is given in detail. 14 synonyms of *Kustha* are *Ruja, Agada, Vyadhi, Amaya, Paribhadra, Rama, Niraja, Vapya, Tvagdosha, Utpala, Kutsa, Patava, Padmaka, Manusangyaka*. *Kustha* has been said as *Katu, Usna, Tikta and Kapha Vatahar*. It is therapeutic action as *Kushtha, Visarpa, Visha, Kandu, and Dadru*¹².

7. Rajvallabha Nighantu

In this *Nighantu* *Guna karma* of *Kustha* is mention in *Aoushadiparichedha*. It is useful in *Svasha, Kasa, Hikka, Jvar and Vata kapha disorder*¹³.

8. Shodhala Nighantu

In this *Nighantu* *Kustha* is described under the *Chandanadivarga*. 14 synonyms of *Kustha* are given in *Shodhala Nighantu* like *Roga, Gada, Vyadhi, Utpala, Pakala, Ruja, Vashpa, Vaniraja, Roma, Kaubera, Paribhadra, Amaya, Pariharya and Utpala*. As per this *Nighantu*

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property of *Kustha* is *Tikta, Madhura, Vatakaphahar and Vishhara*¹⁴.

9.Amarkosha

In this *NighnatuKustha* is mention under *Vanoshadivarga* .The synonyms are *Vyadhi, Paribhavya, Vapya, Pakala, Utpala, Shankhini, Corepushpi, Keshini and Vitunnaka*¹⁵.

10.HardyadipakaNighantu

In this *NighnatuKustha* is mention under *Dvipadavarga* .The synonyms of *KusthaareRuk, Pakala, Vapya, Paribhavya, Gada and Amaya*¹⁶.

11.Asthangnighantu

In this *NighnatuKustha* is mention under *Musthakadigana* . The synonyms of *Kusthaare Pakala, Vari, Bhavya, Vapya and Gadavaya*¹⁷.

12.Abhidhamanrtarnamala

In this *NighnatuKustha* is mention under *Tiktavarga* . The synonyms of *Kustha* are *Durnama, Baluka, Paribhavya and Utpala*¹⁸.

13.LaghuNighantu

In this *Nighantu* synonyms as well as property of *Kustha* are mention .Synonyms of *Kusthaare Roga, Gada, Vyadhi, Utpala, Pakala, Ruja,*

Vapya, Vaniraja, Bhavyam, Kauber, and Paribhadraka .As per this *Nighantu* property of *Kustha* is *Tikta, Madhura, Vata-kaphahar and Vishhara*¹⁹.

14.Susruta Nighantu

In this *NighnatuKustha* is mention under *Elaadigana* . The synonyms of *Kustha* are given in this *Nighantu* is *Utpala, Vapya, Kinjalka, Papaka, Paribhavya, Tvagdosha and Vyadhiare*²⁰.

CONCLUSION

Kusta is the wide spread important drug in the *Ayurvedic* pharmacopeia being in practice since ancient times. There is well documentation about the drug in the ancient literatures. In this review synonyms, *Rasa, guna, virya, vipaka, karma* and indications in various diseases like *Swasa, kasa, vataja and kaphajadisorders*, as well as in *rakthavikarashas* been explored. So the present review gives a direction for future researchers to carry out the research activities on this plant.

Table 1 Synonyms of *Kustha* in various *Nighantu*

	SYNONYMS	Abhidha manrtarn amala	Amark osha	Asthan gnigha ntu	Bhavpraka shaNighant u	Dhanwant riNighant u	Hardyadi pakaNigh antu	Kayade vaNigh antu	Laghu Nigha ntu	Madanpal aNighant u	Nighant ushesy	Raja Nighan tu	Shod hala Nigh antu	Susruta Nighant u
1	Agada					+						+		
2	Amaya						+	+				+	+	
3	Baluka	+												
4	Bhavya			+				+						
5	Corepushpi		+											
6	Divya									+				
7	Durnama	+												
8	Gada			+			+	+	+				+	
9	Kapala							+						
10	Kauber					+			+	+			+	
11	Keshini		+											

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