

## SYNONYMS OF PLANTS IN DRAVYAGUNA VIJNANA- A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW

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### Abstract

Dravyaguna vijnana is the branch of Ayurveda that deals with the study of Dravyas i.e. drugs and Guna i.e. their properties. Naming a plant is very essential in order to identify, classify and differentiate a plant from the other. Plant nomenclature has an important role in Ayurveda as it is utilized as a tool for identifying plants. Synonyms of the a few plants are compiled and presented in this article.

**Key words:** Synonyms; Paryaya; Dravyaguna vijnana.

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## INTRODUCTION

Mother Nature always runs based on the theory of co-existence. Undoubtedly, plants play a key role in providing the basic needs in ecosystems. During ancient times man lived in close vicinity with the plants. This made them to depend upon plants for their food, shelter, clothes and medicine as well. Nature provided the medicine according to the need of the man. For example, Oxygen scarcity at higher altitudes leads to the respiratory diseases and Ephedra is a plant that grows in higher altitudes. Medicinal properties of plant might have been studied based on divine knowledge of sages, accidental experiences, observation on animals and doctrine of signatures. Ancient physicians started naming the plants in order to identify, classify and utility. These names were recorded by means of synonyms. *Namarupa vijnanam* is a special branch of *Dravyaguna Vijnanam* that exclusively deals with the study of *Nama* (Various names) and *Rupa* (Their forms). Acharya PV Sharma says that the word *Namarupa vijnanam* can be interpreted in 3 ways namely<sup>[1]</sup>

1. That by which names and forms of substances (*Dravya*) are known
2. That which imparts knowledge of the forms (*Rupagyana*) of substances on the basis of names
3. That which deals with proper correlation of names and forms so that the entity can be identified correctly.

Raja Narahari Pandita, the author of *Raja Nighantu* provides basis of *Dravya namakarana*<sup>[2]</sup>. He explains 7 important factors to be considered while naming a plant.

1. **Rudhi:** Plants were nameThe names which have been in us traditionally are called as *Rudhi*. Examples include: **Guduchi** (*Tinospora cardifolia*), **Atarusha** (*Adathoda vasica* Linn.),

**Pacham-pacha** and **Katam-kateri** (*Berberis artistata* DC.)

2. **Prabhava/Swabhava:** Plants named based on their common utility which is innate to that particular plant is termed as *Prabhava*. Examples include: **Kushtaghni**- alleviates skin disorders (**Khadira** - *Acacia catechu* L.f), **Shwitragni**- alleviates *Shwitra* (**Bakuchi** - *Psoralea corylifolia* Linn.), **Pleehari**- Alleviates disorders of spleen (**Sharapunka** - *Tephrosia purpurea* Linn.), and **Garbhanut**- that which expels out the fetus (**Langhali**- *Gloriosa superba* Linn.)
3. **Deshokta:** Plants named based on their habitat or source from which they belong to. Examples include: **Malayaja** - Grows in *Malaya* Region i.e. western ghats. **Chandana** - *Santalum album* Linn.), **Kashmira** - Grows in Kashmir and **Bahlika** (*Kumkuma* - *Crocus sativus* Linn.) and **Dravidi** - Grows in Kashmir (*Ela* - *Elettaria cardamomum* Linn.).
4. **Lanchana:** Plants named based on their morphological signs. Examples include: **Deerghaphala**- that which bears long pods (**Aragwadha** - *Cassia fistula* Linn.), **Vakrapushpa**- that which bears curved flowers (**Agastya** - *Sesbania grandiflora* Linn.), **Kharamanjari**- that which bears spinous inflorescence (**Apamarga** - *Achyranthes aspera* Linn.), **Triputa** - that which bears fruits with three surfaces (**Ela** - *Elettaria cardamomum*), **Chitratandula**- that which bears fruits with whitish patches (**Vidanga** - *Embelia ribes* Burm.F).
5. **Upama:** Plants named based on the similes. The plant parts resembling the animals or other objects. Examples include: **Shrungi** - horn like roots (**Ativisha** - *Aconitum heterophyllum* Linn.), **Mastyashakala** - the rhizome

resembles the scales of fish (**Katuki** - *Picrorhiza kurrao* Linn.), **Kimshuka** - Flowers resemble parrot's beak (**Palasha** - *Butea monosperma* (Lam.) Taub.), **Varahakarni** – leaves resemble pig's ear (**Ashwagandha** - *Withania somnifera* Linn.), **Vijidanta** - flowers resemble teeth of horse and **Simhasya** (**Vasa** - *Adathoda vasica* Linn.).

6. **Veerya**: Plants named based on their **Veerya**. Examples include: **Teekshna tandula** - Pungent fruits. (**Pippali** - *Piper longum* Linn.), **Ushana** (**Shunti** - *Zingiber officinale* Linn.), **Sheetavalkala** (**Udumbara** - *Ficus racemosus* Roxb.), **Sheeta** (**Bala**- *Sida cordifolia* Linn.) and **Ushna** (**Maricha**- *Piper nigrum* Linn.).
7. **Itarahwaya**: Other names which do not belong to the above 6 categories. Examples include: **Lavana** - Alleviates many disorders (**Jyotishmati** - *Celastrus paniculatus* Linn.), **Varee** - One of the best drugs (**Shatavari** - *Asparagus racemosus* Willd.), **Shatahwa** – bears numerous flowers (**Shatapushpa** - *Anethum sowa* Linn.), **Pura**- the best amongst gum resin (**Guggulu**- *Commiphora mukul*) and **Panya** - article of trade (**Jyotishmati** - *Celastrus paniculatus* Linn.).

### Factors considered while giving names and synonyms to plants in Ayurveda <sup>[3][4][5][6]</sup>

#### **Swarupa bhodhaka**

Some plants are named based on the habit of the plant. Habit is the characteristic form in which plant species grows.<sup>[7]</sup> Examples include:

- **Nyagrodha** (**Vata**- *Ficus benghalensis* Linn.) meaning the fibers or prop roots descend from its branches to the earth.
- **Punarnava** meaning becoming young or new again (*Boerhavia diffusa* Linn.).

- **Prasarini** meaning that which spreads (*Paederia foetida* Linn.).
- **Sheeghree** and **Vardhamana** (**Eranda**- *Ricinus communis* Linn.) Meaning that which grows and spreads fast.

#### **Avayava bhodhaka**

Plants are named based on the morphology of different parts of the plants.

- **Patra**: based on the morphology of leaves. Examples include: **Triparni** – trifoliate leaves (**Bilva**- *Aegle marmelos* Linn.), **Yugmapatra**- bifid leaves (**Kanchanara**- *Bauhinia purpurea* Linn.), **Balapatra**- small leaves (**Khadira**- *Acacia catechu* L.f.), **Snigdhapatra**- glossy leaves (**Karanja**- *Pongamia pinnata* Linn.), **Saptaparna**- 7 leaves (*Alstonia scholaris* (L.) R.Br.), **Asipatra**- leaves with sword like edges (**Ikshu**- *Saccharum officinarum* Linn.) and **Mandalapatraka**- round shaped leaves (**Shimshipa**- *Dalbergia sissoo* Roxb.ex DC).
- **Pushpa**: Based on the morphology of flowers. Examples include: **Shatapushpa**- bears hundreds of flowers (*Anethum sowa* Linn.), **Peetapushpa**- bears yellow flowers (**Bala**- *Sida cordifolia*), **Gucchapushpa**- cluster of flowers, **Raktapushpa**- red flowers, **Pindapushpa**- flowers in clusters, **Madhupushpa**- sweetish flowers (**Ashoka**- *Saraca indica* Roxb.).
- **Phala**: Based on the morphology of fruits. Examples include: **Kantakapahala**- bears fruits that are spiny (**Dhatu**- *Datura metel* Linn.), **Kathina phala**- bears hard fruits (**Bilva**- *Aegle marmelos* Linn.), **Shukaphala**- fruits resemble parrot (**Arka**- *Calotropis procera* R.Br.), **Brihatphala**- bears huge fruit

(*Kushmanda*- *Benincasa hispida* Thunb), *Jantuphala* (*Udumbara*-*Ficus racemosus* Roxb.) and *Sadaphala*- yields fruits throughout the year in all seasons (*Narikela*- *Cocos nucifera* Linn.).

- **Beeja:** Based on the morphology of seeds. Examples include: *Indrayava*- Seeds resemble *Yava* (*Kutaja*-*Holarrhena antidysentrica* Linn.), *Ekashteela*- has single stony seed (*Patha*- *Cissampelos pareira* Linn.) and *Dantabeeja*- *Manibeeja*- has seeds that resemble teeth or ruby (*Dadima*-*Punica granatum* Linn.).
- **Kanda:** Based on the morphology of seeds. Examples include: *Trivrut*-*Tribhandi* and *Trayastra* (that which has triangular or 3 winged stem-*Operculina turpethum* Linn.), *Chakrangi* (Section of stem shows circular structure-*Tinospora cardifolia* Willd.) and *Kalashaka*- blackish stem (*Murraya koenigii* Linn.).
- **Mula:** Based on the morphology of root. Examples include: *Shatamuli*- hundreds of succulent tuberous roots (*Shatavari*- *Asperagus racemosus* Willd.), *Shuklakanda*- whitish rhizome (*Ativisha*- *Aconitum heterophyllum* Linn.), *Tamramula*- Copper colored roots (*Manjishta*- *Rubia cardifolia* Linn.) and *Sugandhimula* aromatic root (*Sariva*- *Hemidesmus indicus* (L) R. Br.).
- **Ksheera:** Based on the latex. Examples include: *Ksheeravidari* (*Ipomoea digitata* (L). R. Br.), *Swarnaksheeri* (*Argemone Mexicana* Linn.), *Hemadugdha* (*Udumbara*- *Ficus racemosa* Roxb.), *Ksheerashukla* (*Vidari*- *Pueraria tuberosa* Willd.), *Ksheeraparnaka*- *Ksheerakanadaka*

(*Arka*- *Calotropis procera* R. Br.) and *Dugdhika* (*Euphorbia hirta* Linn.).

- **Granthi:** Based on the nodes. Examples include: *Shadgranthi* (*Vacha*- *Acorus calamus* Linn.), *Shatagranthi* (*Durva*- *Cynodon dactylon* Linn.), *Granthiman*- Nodular stem (*Asthishrunkhala*- *Cissus quadrangularis* Linn.).
- **Kantaka:** Based on the spines and thorns. Examples include: *Teekshnakantaka* (*Ingudi*- *Balanites aegyptica* Linn.), *Kantakari* (*Solanum indicum* Linn.), *Gokantaka*-*Sthalakantaka*- *Swadukantaka*-*Bhakshakanta*- *Kantaphala* (*Gokshura* –*Tribulus terrestris* Linn.), *Yugmakantaka*- *Shwajihwakantaka*, *Vyagranakha*- Sharp twin spines (*Snuhi*- *Euphorbia neriifolia* Linn.) and *Adhashalya*- spiny inflorescence which is pointed downwards (*Apamarga* -*Achyranthes aspera* Linn.).
- **Sara:** Based on the heartwood. Examples include: *Saradruma*, *Raktasara*- reddish heartwood (*Khadira*- *Acacia catechu* L.f), *Nisara*- Pseudo- stem has no heartwood (*Kadali* – *Musa paradisiacal* Linn.) and *Peetasara*- Yellowish heartwood (*Ankota*- *Alangium salvifolium* L.f)
- **Valkala:** Based on the bark of the tree. Examples include: *Dhavalala*- whitish bark (*Arjuna*- *Terminalia arjuna* Roxb.), *Sheetavalkala* (*Udumbara*-*Ficus racemosa* Roxb.), *Varatwacha* (*Nimba*- *Azadirachta indica* A. Juss)
- **Roma:** Based on the hairs. Examples: *Kapiromaphala* and *Markati* - legumes covered with stiff hairs like those of monkey (*Kapikacchu*-*Mucuna prurita* Linn.).



- **Manjari:** Based on inflorescence. Examples include: **Hareetamanjari** and **Bahumanjari**- greenish and multiple inflorescence (**Tulasi-Ocimum sanctum** Linn.) and **Shikhari**- Flowers at the terminal end of inflorescence (**Apamarga- Achyranthes aspera** Linn.).
- **Vrunta :** Based on leaf/ flower stalks. Examples include: **Vruntakaphala**- Long petiole (**Vartaki- Solanum melongena** Linn.), **Vruntika** – Long flower stalk (**Neelini- Indigofera tinctoria** Linn.) and **Deerghavrunta**- Long petiole (**Alaru- Alianthus excelsa** Roxb.).

**Gunabhodhaka:** Based on the *Gunas* (qualities). Examples include:

- **Shabda:** Based on the sound. Examples include: **Gunja** (**Abrus precatorius** Linn.)- Fruits make sound, **Nata- Kutannata** and **Tuntuka** – Fruits hang and dance with a sound (**Shyonaka- Oroxyllum indicum** (L)Kurz.).
- **Sparsha:** Based on the texture. Examples include: **Kharapatra**- Rough leaves (**Parijata- Nyctanthus arbor-tristis** Linn.) and **Dushparsha**-difficult to touch because of thorns (**Kantakari- Solanum indicum** Linn.).
- **Rupa:** Based on appearance. Examples include: **Suparna**- Beautiful leaves (**Bakuchi- Psoralia corylifolia** Linn.), **Roopika** – good looking (**Arka-Calotropis procera** R. Br.) and **Charu**-beautiful (**Padmaka- Prunus cerasoides** D. Don).
- **Rasa:** Based on the taste. Examples include: **Swadukantakantaka**- Sweetish (**Gokshura- Tribulus terrestris** Linn.), **Vrikshamla** (**Garcinia indicum**

Linn.), **Amlika** (**Tamarindus indica** Linn.), **Madhuyashti** (**Glycyrrhiza glabra** Linn.) and **Tuvaraka** (**Hydnocarpus laurifolia** (Dennst.) Sleummer. ) and **Swadukanda** – sweetish tuber **Vidarigandha** (**Pueraria tuberosa** (Wild.) DC).

- **Gandha:** Based on the smell. Examples include: **Vajigandha** and **Ashwagandha**- smell like that of horse (**Withania somnifera** Linn.), **Sugandhiphala**- aromatic fruits (**Bilva- Aegle marmelos**), **Gandhaprasarini** (**Paederia foetida** Linn.), **Gandhapriyangu**- Aromatic (**Callicarpa macrophylla** Vahl.), **Sugandhimula**- aromatic roots (**Sariva- Hemidesmus indica** (L.)R.Br.) and **Sugandhi**- aromatic tree (**Agaru-Aquilaria agallocha** (Lour.) Roxb.).
- **Anyaguna:** Other qualities. Examples include: **Teekshnatandula** (**Pippali-Piper longum** Linn.), **Snigdhaparni** (**Karanja- Pongamia pinnata** (L.) Pierre), **Laghu** (**Aguru- Aquilaria agallocha** (Lour.) Roxb.), **Kharahwa** (**Ajamoda- Apium graveolens** Linn.), **Soumya- Sthira** (**Shalaparni-Desmodium gangeticum** (L.) DC.), **Picchila** (**Shalmali- Kokilaksha-Asteracantha longifolia** (L.) Nees) and **Kathina** (**Kakodumbara- Ficus hispida** Linn.).
- **Veerya:** Based on *Veerya* of the plant. Examples include: **Sheeta** (**Bala- Sida cordifolia** Linn.), **Ushana** (**Shunti-Zingiber officinale**)

#### **Prabhava:**

Plants are named based on *Prabhava* (effect). Examples include: **Vishaghna** (**Sirisha-Dalbergia sissoo** DC.)

### **Karma bhodhaka**

Plants are named based on the action. Examples include: **Kushtaghni** (*Khadira-Acacia catechu* (L.f.)), **Kushtavairi** (*Tuvaraka-Hydnocarpus laurifolia* (Dennst.) Sleummer.), **Putrada** (*Ashwagandha-Withania somnifera* Linn.), **Dadrughni** (*Cassia tora* Linn.), **Kasaghni-Raktapittaghni** (*Vasa-Adathoda vasica* Linn.), **Kushtasudhana** (*Aragwadha-Cassia fistula* Linn.), **Kasamarda** (*Senna occidentalis* Linn.), **Ashmanataka** (*Cordia dichotoma* G.Forst.), **Shophapaha** (*Ativisha-Aconitum heterophyllum* Linn.) and **Hridrogavairi-Shwasaneshwara** (*Arjuna-Terminalia arjuna* (Roxb.))

### **Udbhava bhodhaka**

Plants are named based on *utpatti*. Examples include:

- **Yoni: Mruganabhi** and **Krimija** (*Agaru-Aquilaria agallocha* (Lour.) Roxb.)
- **Rohana: Kandaruha** and **Chinnaruha** (*Guduchi-Tinospora cardifolia* Willd.)
- **Adhishtana** (Habitat): **Jalabrahmi** (*Bacopa monnieri* (L.) Wettst.), **Nadeyi** (*Agnimantha-Premna integrifolia* Willd) and **Nadisarja** (*Arjuna-Terminalia arjuna* (Roxb.))

### **Lokopayogi bhodhaka**

Based on its usage. Examples include: **Yajnika, Gayatri** (*Khadira-Acacia catechu* (L.f.)), **Devadhupa** (*Guggulu-Commiphora mukul* Hook.ex Stocks), **Vishwadhupakam** (*Agaru-Aquilaria agallocha* (Lour.) Roxb.), **Karmara-Venu-Dhanudruma** (*Vamsha-Bambusa bambos* (L.) Voss) and **Rathadruma** (*Tinisha-Ougeinia dalbergioides* Benth).

### **Itihaasa prasiddha**

Plants are named based on the historical background. Examples include: **Bodhidruma** (*Ashwattha-Ficus religiosa* Linn.), **Partha** (*Arjuna-Terminalia arjuna* Roxb.), **Munidruma** (*Agastya-Sesbania grandiflora* Linn.), **Kubesrakshi** (*Latakaranja-Caesalpinia crista* Linn.), **Somaraji** (*Bakuchi-Psoralia corylifolia* Linn.), **Punarnava** (*Boerhavia diffusa* Linn.), **Aindree** (*Brahmi-Bacopa monnieri* (L.) Wettst.), **Devadundhubhi** (*Tulasi-Ocimum sanctum* Linn.), **Ramaphala** (*Annona reticulata* Linn.), **Seethaphala** (*Annona squamosa* Linn.), **Shivam** (*Amalaki-Emblia officinalis* Gaertn), **Lakshmanaphala** (*Annona muricata* Linn.), **Chandrashura** (*Lepidium sativum* Linn.), **Indravaruni** (*Citrulus colocynthis* Schrad.), **Tapasadruma** (*Ingudi-Balanites aegyptica* Linn.) and **Devadhupa** (*Guggulu-Commiphora mukul* Hook.ex Stocks).

### **Prashathibodhaka**

Plants are named based on the appreciation or Examples include: **Devakusuma** (*Lavanga-Syzygium aromaticum* (Linn.) Merr M.Perry.), **Mangalya** (*Tulasi-Ocimum sanctum* Linn.), **Jayanti** (*Agnimantha-Premna integrifolia* Willd.), **Bhishagmatha** (*Vasa-Adathoda vasica* Linn.), **Rajarham** (*Agaru-Aquilaria agallocha* (Lour.) Roxb.), **Rajavruksha** (*Aragwadha-Cassia fistula* Linn.) and **Munidruma** (*Agastya-Sesbania grandiflora* Linn.).

### **Deshabodhaka**

Plants are named based on the native or place of origin or availability. Examples include: **Magadhi**- generally grows in *Magadha desha* (**Pippali**), **Kalingaka** (*Maricha-Piper nigrum* Linn.), **Saihmalam** (*Twak-Cinnamomum zeylanicum* Breyn Pennel.), **Kampillaka**- generally grows in *Kampilla desha* (*Mallotus philippinensis* Muell.) and **Korangakam** -

grows in Koranga desha (*Amalaki- Emblica officinalis* Gaertn).

### Kalabodhaka

**Vasantha** (*Vibheetaki- Terminalia bellirica* (Gaertn.) Roxb.), **Sharada** (*Saptaparna - Alstonia scholaris* (L.) R Br), **Chaitra vruksha** (*Amra- Mangifera indica* Linn.), **Varshapushpika** (*Atibala- Abutilon indicum* Linn.), **Varshaketu- Varshabu** (*Punarnava- Boerhavia diffusa* Linn.) and **Maghava** (*Madhuka- Madhuca indica* J.F.Gmel.). These synonyms indicate the flowering seasons.

### Avayava Sadrusha

**Amashayaphala-** fruits resemble stomach (*Panasa- Artocarpus heterophyllus* Lam.), **Chaturangula-** having four finger length fruits. (*Aragwadha- Cassia fistula* Linn.), **Ostopamaphala-** fruits resemble lips (*Bimbi- Coccinia grandis* (Linn.) Voigt), **Gandharvahastha-** palmately lobed leaf (*Eranda- Ricinus communis* Linn.) and **Gostanee** – fruits resemble the udder (*Draksha- Vitis vinifera* Linn.)

- **Prani sadrusha: Vyagrapuccha-** that which resembles the tail of Lion and **Gandharvahastha-** palmately lobed leaves (*Eranda- Ricinus communis* Linn.), **Vajidantha-** flowers resemble the teeth of horses and **Simhasya** – Flowers resemble the open mouth of lion (*Vasa- Adathoda vasica* Linn.), **Kakanasa, Varahakarni-** leaves resemble the pig's ear (*Ashwagandha- Withania somnifera* Linn. ), **Nagakeshara-** stamens resemble hood of snake (*Mesua ferrea* Linn. ), **Gojihwa** – leaves resemble the cow's tongue (*Onosma bracteatum* Wall).
- **Based on Mana: Karshaphala** (*Vibhitaki- Terminalia bellirica* (Gaertn.) Roxb.) and

**Kolam**(*Amalaki- Emblica officinalis* Gaertn)

- **Swasthyakaraka: Abhaya, Avyatha** and **Pranada** (*Hareetaki- Terminalia chebula* Retz), **Dhatree-** sustains *dhatu*s and protects health like mother does (*Amalaki- Emblica officinalis* Gaertn), **Shishubheshaja-** that which is beneficial for pediatric diseases (*Ativisha- Aconitum heterophyllum* Linn.), **Arogyashimbhi** –that which promotes health (*Aragwadha- Cassia fistula* Linn.) and **Ashoka** – that which eradicates worries (*Saraca indica* Roxb.).
- **Vyadhi hetu: Arushakra-** causes blisters and swelling on touch (**Bhallataka-** *Semecarpus anacardium* L.f), **Madahetu-** causes Mada (**Dhataki-** *Woodfordia fruticosa* (L.) Kurz), **Karshya** – cause emaciation (**Asana-** *Pterocarpus marsupium* Roxb.), **Shiroruk-** flowers are intensely aromatic that they cause head ache (**Saptaparna-** *Alstonia scholaris* (L.) R Br), **Netrari** (*Snuhi- Euphorbia neriifolia* Linn.) and **Keshahantree-** causes hair fall (**Shami-** *Prosopis cineraria*. (L.) Druce).
- **Based on availability: Bahwi and Vishwa Nagaram** (*Shunti-Zingiber officinale* Linn.) and **Pura** (*Guggulu- Commiphora mukul* Hook.ex Stocks).
- **Action on animals: Hayamara** (**Karaveera-** *Nerium oleander* Linn.) and **Matsantaka phala** (**Madanaphala-** *Randia spinosa* (Thunb.) Poir.).
- **Liked by animals: Vatsadani-** liked by calf (**Guduchi-** *Tinospora cordifolia* (Willd.)), **Krodeshta** -liked by Pigs (**Mustha** - *Cyperus rotundus* Linn.),

- Gajavajestha*, *Shrugalaka* and *Bidalaka*- liked by elephants, horses, jackals and cats (*Vidarikanda*-*Pueraria tuberosa* (Willd.) DC).
- **Movement of leaves:** *Vyadambaka* (*Eranda*-*Ricinus communis* Linn.) and *Chalapatra* (*Ashwattha*-*Ficus religiosa* Linn.)
  - **Liked by women:** *Streepriya*, *Yoshitapriya* (*Haridra*-*Curcuma longa* Linn. and *Ashoka*-*Saraca indica* Roxb.), *Kumari* and *Grihakanya* (*Kumari*-*Aloe vera* (L.) Burm.f).
  - **Offers to the gods:** *Shivapriya* (*Bilva*-*Aegle marmelos* Linn.) and *Vishnupriya*, *Krishnapriya* (*Tulasi*-*Ocimum sanctum* Linn.)
  - **Usage in Preparing madhya:** *Harihura* (*Draksha*-*Vitis vinifera* Linn.), *Sidhupushpi* (*Dhataki*-*Woodfordia fruticosa* (L.) Kurz), *Shaundi* (*Pippali*), *Shaundikapriya* and *Madirasaka*.
  - **According to Pathya:** *Pathya* (*Hareetaki*-*Terminalia chebula* Retz), *Pathyashaka* (*Mundi*-*Sphaeranthus indicus* Linn.) and *Pathyakari* (*Dadima*-*Punica granatum* Linn.).
  - **Flowers blooming on specific Nakshatra:** *Agastya* (*Sesbania grandiflora* Linn.) and *Shravani* (*Mundi*-*Sphaeranthus indicus* Linn.).
  - **Protection against evil spirits:** *Grahanashana* (*Saptaparni*-*Alstonia scholaris* (L.) R. Br.), *Bhutaghna* (*Rasona*-*Allium sativum* Linn.) and *Bhutahanti* (*Mundi*-*Sphaeranthus indicus* Linn.).
  - **Oil Yeilding:** *Snehaprada* (*Eranda*-*Ricinus communis* Linn.), *Beejasneha* (*Palasha*-*Butea monosperma* (Lam.) Taub.), *Tailabeeja* (*Bhallataka*-*Semecarpus anacardium* L. f.) and *Snehaprada* (*Jati*-*Jasminum officinale* Linn.).
  - **Worm infestations:** *Ghunapriya* (*Dantee*-*Baliospermum montanum* (Willd.), *Krimijagdhama* (*Ativisha*-*Aconitum heterophyllum* Linn.) and *Ghunavallabha* (*Agaru*-*Aquilaria agallocha* (Lour.) Roxb.).
  - **Kshara yielding:** *Ksharashreshta* (*Palasha*-*Butea monosperma* (Lam.) Taub.), *Kshara vriksha* (*Mushkaka*-*Schrebera swietenoides* Roxb.) and *Ksharamadhya* (*Apamarga*-*Achyranthes aspera* Linn.).
  - **Action on Dosha:** *Vatari* (*Eranda*-*Ricinus communis* Linn.), *Marutaghni* (*Ashwagandha*-*Withania somnifera* Linn.), *Vatahara* (*Palasha*-*Butea monosperma* (Lam.)Taub.), *Kaphavirodhi* (*Maricha*-*Piper nigrum* Linn.), *Kaphaha* (*Vasa*-*Adathoda vasica* Linn.), *Vatada* (*Prunus dulcis* (Mill.) D.A.Webb) and *Kaphari* (*Shunti*-*Zingiber officinale* Linn.).
  - **Flowering and Fruiting:** *Sakrutphala* meaning fruiting occurs only once in its lifetime- *Kadali* (*Musa paradisiaca* Linn.) and *Mrutypushpi* meaning that the plant dies after flowering- *Ikshu* (*Saccharum officinarum* Linn.).

## DISCUSSION

Ancient physicians used to identify the plants based in their synonyms .As there was no scientific system of classification and nomenclature of plants, synonyms were the



only tools. This nomenclature system has witnessed evolution since ages. Earlier, during the Vedic period, many plants were in use. There was no question of confusion. Most of the plants were named based on historical background like, *Mahabala* and *Muchakunda*<sup>[8]</sup> as they were the names of Gods. During samhita period also the names remained uncontroversial as very few names were used as synonyms.

*Nighantu* period marked revolutionary steps in the field of synonyms as the number of synonyms were increased significantly. *Nighantus* are the lexicons which are the glossaries of the classical texts. It is believed that, each of *Bruhatrayee* had separate *Nighantu*.<sup>[9]</sup> Earlier *Nighantus* contained only the names and synonyms whereas later ones contained the synonyms along with the properties of those plants. In order to describe the plants in detail, *Nighantukaaras* added more number of synonyms which included the names of the different local varieties, vernacular names, repetitions of the same names for multiple plants which eventually gave rise to a group of plants named *Sandhigdha dravyas*.

A plant whose botanical identity is controversial is considered as *Sandhigdha dravyas*. Few examples for controversies rose due to the synonyms:

- *Amruta* is the synonym used for more than one plant like *Guduchi* (*Tinospora cordifolia* (Willd.) Miers) and *Vatsanabha* (*Aconitum ferox* Wall.)
- *Vijaya* - *Hareetaki* (*Terminalia chebula*), *Bhanga* (*Cannabis sativum*) and *Vacha* (*Acorus calamus* Linn.).
- *Samanga* - *Lajjalu* (*Mimosa pudica* Linn.) and *Manjishta* (*Rubia cardifolia* Linn.)
- *Sadaphala* - *Narikela* (*Cocos nucifera* Linn.) and *Bilva* (*Aegle marmelos* (L.) Correa)

- *Swadukantaka* - *Gokshura* (*Tribulus terrestris* Linn.) and *Vikankata* (*Flacourtia indica* (Burm.f.) Merr.)
- *Sutiktaka* and *Varatikta* - *Nimba* (*Azadirachta india* A. Juss) and *Rohitaka* (*Tecomella undulata* Seem.)
- *Amogha-Shyonaka* (*Oroxylum indicum*(L) Kurz.) and *Vidanga* (*Embelia ribes* Burm. f.)
- *Ananta-Sariva* (*Hemidesmus indicus* (L.)R. Br.) and *Durva* (*Cynodon dactylon* (L.) Pers.)
- *Rasala-Ikshu* (*Saccharum officinarum*), *Amra* (*Mangifera indica* Linn.) and *Draksha* (*Vitis vinifera* Linn.)

On the other hand synonyms made it very easy to understand plant morphology even in the minute note. Synonyms not only help to identify the plant, but also to understand its habit, habitat, propagation, flowering – fruiting seasons, availability, main action and *Rasapanchaka*. Here are few examples:

*Eranda (Ricinus communis Linn.):* can be easily identified based on the synonyms given to the plant.

- *Hastiparnaka, Gandharvahasta and Panchaguli*- palmately lobed and large leaves.
- *Uttanapatraka* - Leaf facing the upwards
- *Deerghadanda*- Long petiole
- *Vyaghrapuccha*- Inflorescence resembling the tiger.

*Shatavari (Asparagus racemosus Willd. ):*

- *Adharakantaka*- spines in the stem which are curved
- *Sukshma patra*- leaves are very minute
- *Phanijihwaparni*- Leaves resemble the tongue of snake
- *Shatapadi*- numerous tuberous roots

Not just in the field identification, but also the drugs can be identified in dry forms using synonyms. Examples:

- **Ativisha** (*Aconitum heterophyllum* Linn.): Synonyms like **Shrungi** – the roots resemble horns, **Bhangura**-brittleness or fragility helps us to test the quality of the samples of **Ativisha**.
- **Katuki** (*Picrorhiza kurroa*): Synonyms like **Mastyashkala**-rhizomes have surface resembling the scales of fish skin, **Katvi-Tikta** (bitter and unpalatable) and **Chakrangi** – section of stem shows circular ring.
- **Agaru** (*Aquillaria agallocha* Roxb): synonyms like **Laghu** (light in weight), **Loham** (Blackish color like that of Iron) and **Sugandhi** (Aromatic).
- **Asthisamhari** (*Cissus quadrangularis* Linn.): Synonyms like **Chatusira** (stem is quadrangular) and **Granthimaan** (Nodular)

Synonyms also help us in choosing the drug of choice in a particular given condition as plants have been given names based on their specific action. Here are few examples:

- **Shulashatru** (*Eranda- Ricinus communis* Linn.)- that which alleviates pain
- **Yukari** (*Langali- Gloriosa superba* Linn.)- that which alleviates lice
- **Udgarashodhana** (*Krishnabeeja- Nigella sativum* Linn.)- that which cleanses
- **Kushtagni** (*Khadira- Acacia catechu* (L.f.) Willd.)- that which alleviates skin disorders
- **Dadrughni** (*Chakramarda- Cassia tora* Linn.)- that which alleviates ringworm

- **Shramapaha** and **Yakshmaghni** (*Draksha- Vitis vinifera* Linn.)- that which alleviates fatigue
- **Puyari** (*Nimba- Azadirachta indica* A. Juss.)- that which alleviates pus
- **Vidradhighna** (*Shigru- Moringa oleifera* Lam.) – that which cures abscess
- **Yonishulaghni** (*Kalajaji- Nigella sativum* Linn.) – that which alleviates menstrual disorders
- **Kushtavairi** (*Tuvaraka- Hydnocarpus laurifolia* (Dennst) Sleummer.)- that which alleviates skin disorders
- **Krimighna** (*Vidanga- Embelia ribes* Burm. f.)- that which alleviates intestinal worms
- **Kushtasudhana** and **Jwarantaka** (*Aragwadha- Cassia fistula* Linn.)- that which alleviates skin disorders and fever
- **Kasaghni** (*Kantakari- Solanum indicum* Linn.)- that which alleviates cough
- **Sleepadari** (*Karanja- Pongamia pinnata* (L.) Pierre)- that which alleviates *sleepada* (Filariasis)
- **Switrabheshaja** (*Kakodumbara- Ficus hispida* Linn.)- that which is used in pediatric diseases

Few synonyms not just explain the action of the drug, but also the mode of action of the drug like,

- **Dravani** – that which liquefies the *Kapha* (**Pippali- Piper longum** Linn.)
- **Sarini** – that which cleanses the *Mutravaha Srotas* by causing *Mutra sarana* (**Punarnava- Boerhavia diffusea** Linn.)
- **Shodhana** – that which protects by doing purification (**Amalaki- Emblica officinalis** Gaertn).
- **Arevata**- that which causes *Malasarana* acting as *Mrudu rechaka* (**Aragwadha- Cassia fistula** Linn.)

## CONCLUSION

Synonyms are the boon in Ayurveda and the controversies created due to more number of synonyms cannot be denied as well. Synonyms that are very much meaningful and the most relevant ones that are essential for the identification of the plants must be differentiated from that of the synonyms that create controversies regarding identity. Study and Knowledge of synonyms is an important aspect in both *Samhitas* and *Nighantus* to *Ayurveda Vaidyas*. To conclude, I claim that the role of Synonyms and plants are so very intimate that they are the two faces of the same coin.

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