International Journal of Research in Pharmacy and Pharmaceutical Sciences
www.pharmacyjournal.in
ISSN: 2455-698X
Received: 05-02-2023, Accepted: 04-03-2023, Published: 25-03-2023
Volume 8, Issue 1, 2023, Page No. 36-38

Exploring the medicinal properties of *Strobilanthes jomyi*: A pharmacognostic, phytochemical, and pharmacological investigation

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Abstract
The medicinal properties of *Strobilanthes jomyi* were explored through pharmacognostic, phytochemical, and pharmacological investigations to validate its traditional uses. Pharmacognostic analysis revealed distinct microscopic and macroscopic features for the authentication of the plant. Phytochemical screening identified key bioactive compounds, including quercetin, rutin, gallic acid, and volatile compounds such as phytol and linoleic acid. These compounds were quantitatively analyzed using HPLC and GC-MS, with results indicating notable antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities. The antioxidant potential, assessed via DPPH and ABTS assays, revealed significant radical scavenging activity, with IC50 values of 42.6 µg/mL and 36.9 µg/mL, respectively. In vivo, *S. jomyi* demonstrated a dose-dependent reduction in paw edema, achieving a 67.3% inhibition at 200 mg/kg, similar to the effects of the standard drug, diclofenac sodium. These findings suggest that *S. jomyi* is a promising candidate for the development of natural antioxidants and anti-inflammatory agents, warranting further research into its bioactive components and mechanisms of action.

Keywords: *Strobilanthes jomyi*, pharmacognostic analysis, phytochemical profiling, antioxidant activity, anti-inflammatory activity, flavonoids, phenolic compounds, HPLC, GC-MS, traditional medicine

Introduction

The quest for novel therapeutic agents has driven extensive research into medicinal plants, many of which serve as reservoirs of bioactive compounds with significant pharmacological potential. Among such plants, species of the genus *Strobilanthes* have garnered attention for their wide-ranging medicinal properties, attributed to their rich phytochemical diversity. This genus, comprising approximately 450 species distributed across tropical Asia, is traditionally known for its therapeutic applications, including anti-inflammatory, antimicrobial, and antioxidant activities. However, specific species such as *Strobilanthes jomyi* remain underexplored despite their traditional medicinal use and anecdotal evidence of efficacy.

The article *"Exploring the Medicinal Properties of Strobilanthes jomyi: A Pharmacognostic, Phytochemical, and Pharmacological Investigation"* provides a comprehensive examination of the pharmacognostic characteristics, phytochemical constituents, and pharmacological activities of this relatively obscure plant species. By integrating diverse methodologies, the study seeks to establish a robust foundation for the therapeutic applications of *S. jomyi* while addressing gaps in the scientific literature regarding its bioactive compounds and mechanisms of action.

Pharmacognostic analysis, a cornerstone of the study, encompasses the macroscopic and microscopic characterization of *S. jomyi*, enabling the identification of diagnostic features essential for quality control and authentication of plant materials used in traditional and modern medicinal formulations. These parameters are vital for ensuring the reproducibility of therapeutic effects, especially in the context of herbal medicines, where variability in plant material often compromises efficacy and safety [1].

The phytochemical investigation focuses on the qualitative and quantitative profiling of secondary metabolites, including alkaloids, flavonoids, phenolic acids, and saponins, which are reputed for their health-promoting properties. Advanced analytical techniques such as high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) and gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS) were utilized to identify and quantify these compounds, offering insights into their potential contributions to the observed pharmacological activities [2, 3].

In addition to these chemical explorations, the study evaluates the pharmacological potential of *S. jomyi* through in vitro and in vivo experiments. Notable findings include the plant's anti-inflammatory and antioxidant activities, which may underpin its traditional usage in managing inflammatory disorders and oxidative stress-related conditions. These activities are hypothesized to arise from the synergistic effects of its bioactive compounds, reinforcing the growing interest in phytomedicine as a source of multitarget therapeutic agents [4].

Overall, this study not only highlights the medicinal potential of *Strobilanthes jomyi* but also underscores the importance of integrative approaches combining pharmacognostic, phytochemical, and pharmacological investigations to substantiate the traditional use of medicinal plants. Such efforts are critical for advancing ethnopharmacological knowledge and promoting the development of plant-derived pharmaceuticals.

Materials and methods

Materials

The plant material of *Strobilanthes jomyi* was collected from its natural habitat in the Western Ghats, India, during its peak flowering season (July–August). The plant was authenticated by a taxonomist, and a voucher specimen (SJ-

2023) was deposited in the herbarium of the host institution for future reference. Fresh leaves, stems, and roots were separated, washed with distilled water, and air-dried under shade for 10 days. The dried materials were ground into a coarse powder using a mechanical grinder and stored in airtight containers at room temperature until further analysis. Analytical grade solvents and reagents, including methanol, ethanol, and ethyl acetate, were procured from Sigma-Aldrich for extraction and phytochemical studies. High-purity water was obtained through a Milli-Q system and used throughout the experimental procedures.

Methods

Pharmacognostic analysis was conducted using standard macroscopic and microscopic techniques, focusing on diagnostic features such as leaf venation, stomatal type, trichome morphology, and root structure, as described by Mukherjee et al. [1]. Phytochemical screening involved qualitative tests for alkaloids, flavonoids, phenolic compounds, tannins, and saponins, following established protocols [3]. For quantitative analysis, methanolic extracts were prepared through Soxhlet extraction, and compound profiling was performed using high-performance liquid chromatography (HPLC) and gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC-MS), as outlined by Wang et al. [2]. The pharmacological evaluation included antioxidant assays, such as DPPH and ABTS free radical scavenging activities, and an in vivo anti-inflammatory study using a carrageenan-induced paw edema model in Wistar rats. Ethical approval for animal experiments was obtained from the institutional animal ethics committee (approval number IAEC/2023/SJ). Statistical analyses were performed using GraphPad Prism software, with results expressed as mean ± standard error of the mean (SEM), and significance determined at $P < 0.05$.

Results

Pharmacognostic analysis

The macroscopic and microscopic evaluation of *Strobilanthes jomyi* revealed distinct diagnostic features. Macroscopic examination showed ovate-lanceolate leaves with serrated margins, opposite phyllotaxy, and dark green coloration on the adaxial surface. Microscopic analysis of leaf sections demonstrated anomocytic stomata, unicellular non-glandular trichomes, and a prominent midrib with collateral vascular bundles. Root sections exhibited a well-developed secondary xylem with thick-walled tracheids and fibers. These findings align with pharmacognostic parameters essential for authentication and standardization of medicinal plant materials [1].

Phytochemical profiling

Preliminary phytochemical screening revealed the presence of alkaloids, flavonoids, phenolic compounds, tannins, and saponins. Quantitative analysis using HPLC identified quercetin (0.45 mg/g dry weight), rutin (0.62 mg/g dry weight), and gallic acid (0.38 mg/g dry weight) as major flavonoids and phenolic constituents. GC-MS analysis detected a range of volatile compounds, including phytol (15.2%), hexadecanoic acid (9.8%), and linoleic acid (7.5%) in methanolic extracts. Total phenolic content (TPC) and total flavonoid content (TFC) were estimated as 56.4 ± 3.2 mg GAE/g and 32.1 ± 2.5 mg RE/g, respectively, confirming the plant's phytochemical richness [2, 3].

Pharmacological evaluation

The antioxidant potential of *S. jomyi* was assessed through DPPH and ABTS radical scavenging assays. Methanolic extracts demonstrated significant activity, with IC50 values of 42.6 ± 1.8 µg/mL and 36.9 ± 1.4 µg/mL for DPPH and ABTS assays, respectively. These values were comparable to ascorbic acid (IC50 = 25.2 ± 0.9 µg/mL). In the carrageenan-induced paw edema model, methanolic extracts exhibited dose-dependent anti-inflammatory effects. The maximum inhibition of paw edema (67.3 ± 3.1%) was observed at a dose of 200 mg/kg, comparable to the standard drug diclofenac sodium (72.5 ± 2.8%) at 10 mg/kg. These results highlight the plant's potential as a source of antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agents [4].

Table 1: Summary of Results for *Strobilanthes jomyi*

Parameter	Findings/Values	Notes
Pharmacognostic Analysis		
Macroscopic Features	Ovate-lanceolate leaves, serrated margins	Dark green adaxial surface, opposite phyllotaxy
Microscopic Features	Anomocytic stomata, unicellular non-glandular trichomes	Collateral vascular bundles in midrib, secondary xylem in roots
Phytochemical Profiling		
Major Flavonoids (HPLC)	Quercetin: 0.45 mg/g, Rutin: 0.62 mg/g	Dry weight basis
Major Phenolics (HPLC)	Gallic acid: 0.38 mg/g	Dry weight basis
Volatile Compounds (GC-MS)	Phytol: 15.2%, Hexadecanoic acid: 9.8%, Linoleic acid: 7.5%	Identified in methanolic extracts
Total Phenolic Content (TPC)	56.4 ± 3.2 mg GAE/g	GAE = Gallic Acid Equivalent
Total Flavonoid Content (TFC)	32.1 ± 2.5 mg RE/g	RE = Rutin Equivalent
Antioxidant Activities		
DPPH Radical Scavenging	IC50 = 42.6 ± 1.8 µg/mL	Comparable to ascorbic acid (IC50 = 25.2 ± 0.9 µg/mL)
ABTS Radical Scavenging	IC50 = 36.9 ± 1.4 µg/mL	Comparable to ascorbic acid (IC50 = 25.2 ± 0.9 µg/mL)
Anti-inflammatory Activity		
Maximum Inhibition of Paw Edema	67.3 ± 3.1% at 200 mg/kg dose	Comparable to diclofenac sodium (72.5 ± 2.8% at 10 mg/kg dose)

This table summarizes the pharmacognostic, phytochemical, antioxidant, and anti-inflammatory results of *Strobilanthes jomyi*. The quantitative data demonstrates the plant's medicinal potential and aligns with its traditional uses.

Discussion

The pharmacognostic, phytochemical, and pharmacological investigations of *Strobilanthes jomyi* revealed significant medicinal potential, supporting its traditional use. The diagnostic features observed during the pharmacognostic

evaluation, such as anomocytic stomata and the presence of unicellular non-glandular trichomes, serve as reliable markers for the authentication of *S. jomyi*. These findings are consistent with previous studies on *Strobilanthes* species, which also emphasize the role of microscopic features in ensuring the quality of medicinal plant materials [1].

The phytochemical profiling demonstrated the abundance of bioactive secondary metabolites, particularly flavonoids and phenolic compounds. The identified flavonoids, such as quercetin and rutin, are known for their potent antioxidant properties, which may explain the strong DPPH and ABTS radical scavenging activities observed in this study. Notably, the antioxidant activity (IC50 values of 42.6 µg/mL for DPPH and 36.9 µg/mL for ABTS) is comparable to or better than other *Strobilanthes* species studied previously, such as *Strobilanthes ciliatus*, which exhibited IC50 values of 50.2 µg/mL and 41.3 µg/mL, respectively [5]. This highlights the potential of *S. jomyi* as a source of natural antioxidants for therapeutic applications.

The anti-inflammatory activity of *S. jomyi*, as evidenced by a 67.3% inhibition of carrageenan-induced paw edema at 200 mg/kg, is similarly noteworthy. This result aligns closely with findings for *Strobilanthes crispus*, which demonstrated comparable anti-inflammatory effects in a similar model [6]. The presence of bioactive compounds such as phytol and linoleic acid, detected in the GC-MS analysis, may contribute to these effects, given their reported anti-inflammatory properties [7]. Furthermore, the observed activity is comparable to standard drugs like diclofenac sodium, underscoring the plant's potential as a safer alternative for managing inflammation.

Compared to other studies on medicinal plants with similar profiles, the results for *S. jomyi* demonstrate a promising balance of antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities. For instance, *Andrographis paniculata* is another well-studied plant with potent antioxidant (IC50 for DPPH: 30.5 µg/mL) and anti-inflammatory (60% edema inhibition at 200 mg/kg) activities, yet the secondary metabolite composition differs significantly, indicating unique pharmacological contributions of *S. jomyi* [8].

In conclusion, the findings from this study strongly advocate for the medicinal potential of *Strobilanthes jomyi*, especially as a source of natural antioxidants and anti-inflammatory agents. Future studies should focus on isolating individual compounds and elucidating their mechanisms of action to further validate these therapeutic claims.

Conclusion

This study provides compelling evidence of the medicinal potential of *Strobilanthes jomyi*, demonstrating its significant antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities. The pharmacognostic features of the plant offer reliable markers for its identification and quality control, while the phytochemical analysis highlights the presence of bioactive compounds, including flavonoids, phenolic acids, and volatile compounds, that contribute to its therapeutic properties. The antioxidant and anti-inflammatory activities observed in *S. jomyi* align with its traditional uses and suggest that it may serve as a valuable source of natural therapeutic agents. Future research focused on isolating and characterizing the individual bioactive compounds of *S. jomyi* will help to further substantiate its potential as a functional medicine in treating oxidative stress and inflammatory disorders.

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