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Pharmacognostical, phytochemical, pharmacological evaluation of Melastoma malabathricum Plant Linn.: A Review

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Abstract

This comprehensive review investigates the pharmacognostical, phytochemical, and pharmacological attributes of Melastoma malabathricum L., a plant species belonging to the Melastomataceae family, commonly known as senduduk. This plant thrives in various habitats, including waste grounds and open fields in Malaysia, and is traditionally used across Indonesia, Malaysia, and India for its therapeutic properties. Phytochemical investigations have revealed a diverse array of bioactive compounds within the plant, supporting its traditional medicinal applications. Furthermore, numerous pharmacological studies have demonstrated its potential in treating a range of conditions, including inflammation, oxidative stress, microbial infections, and cancer. However, further research is needed to elucidate the underlying mechanisms of action and to validate its efficacy and safety for human use. Overall, Melastoma malabathricum presents itself as a promising source of natural compounds with significant pharmacological potential, warranting continued exploration in the field of herbal medicine.

Keywords: Melastoma malabathricum, pharmacognostical, phytochemical, pharmacological, traditional medicine

Introduction

India possesses the expertise and know-how to advance its R&D capacities. In terms of medicinal plant exports, it ranks second. It could consider building its own R&D capabilities and producing finished goods in the form of contemporary medicines and health care products derived from plant origin and based on the knowledge of alternative systems of medicine, rather than exporting such a large amount of valuable resource with very low returns. Approximately 80% of people worldwide utilize herbal medications, which are in high demand. (Bhowmik D et al., 2009)^[1]. Traditional or ethno medicine is based on the medical uses of plants, which have been utilized for ages by many civilizations worldwide. The therapeutic applications of plants in conventional medical practices-often handed down through generations within particular communities-are referred to as ethno medical advantages. The Melastomataceae family of plants, which includes over 4,000 species worldwide, is native to tropical and subtropical climates. The genus Melastoma includes 22 species, 2 subspecies, and 3 variations only in Southeast Asia (Joffry SM et al., 2012)^[2]. Melastoma malabathricum L. is a plant species from the Melastomataceae family which is commonly a shurb. In Malaysia, waste grounds and open fields are a frequent habitat for Melastoma malabathricum (MM), also referred to as senduduk ^[2]. In Indonesia, Malaysia, and India, people utilize its roots, bark, and leaves as medicine to cure leucorrhoea, hemorrhoids, diarrhea, wounds, dysentery, stomachache, confinement infections, toothache, thrush, flatulence, and painful legs (Kumar V et al., 2013)^[3].



Purple flower of Melastoma malabathricum

Pink flower of Melastoma malabathricum



White flower of Melastoma malabathricum

Melastoma malabathricum is a three-type plant (Idris M *et al.*, 2022)^[4].

The large, dark purple-magenta blooms comprise the first variation. Edium-sized blooms with pale pinkish-magenta petals make up the second variation. The third variety is a rare one that has little white flowers.



Fig 1: Ripe fruit



Fig 2: Unripe fruit

Fruit is produced by the plants between May and July (Susanti *et al.*, 2006) ^[5]. It has been reported that a variety of plant parts, including the roots, stems, leaves, flowers, and fruit of Senggani, exhibit pharmacological activities at varying dosages and concentrations, including antiviral, antibacterial, anti-parasite, cytotoxic, antioxidant, anticoagulant, Platelet Activating Factor (PAF) inhibition, antiulcer, anti-inflammatory, wound healing, antipyretic, antinociceptive, antivenom, and antidiarrheal (Khoo LT *et al.*, 2014) ^[6]. Because of its traditional therapeutic uses, this shrub plant is one of the natural plant resources that has drawn interest from scientists (Wong KC *et al.*, 2012) ^[7].

Botanical description

Melastoma malabathricum, an evergreen tree, exhibits distinctive features that contribute to its identification. The tree is characterized by its perennial flowering, maintaining blossoms throughout the year. Typically, it attains a height of about 4 meters, although instances of growth reaching up to 6 meters have been observed (Ringmichon CL *et al* 2010^[8]; Parthana C *et al.*, 2023)^[9].

Specific features Leaf

• Leaf Size: 3.5 cm wide and 14 cm long.

- Leaf colour: Lower surface, which is a lighter green, top surface has a little darker green colour.
- Leaf Venation: Reticulate.
- Leaf Texture: Hairy.

Flower

- Flower Color: Diverse, including shades of pink, purple, or white
- Calyx: Lanceolate to ovate calyx lobes
- **Corolla:** Pentamerous (with five petals)
- Stamens: Numerous, with anthers containing pollen
- Pistil: Single
- Flowering Period: May to July which only last one to two days, are grouped together in groups of five to ten

Fruit

- Shape: Oval-shaped
- Fruit Type: Berry (varies among different varieties)
- Fruit Size: Typically small, ranging from 0.5 to 1 centimeter
- Fruit Color: creamy white while immature, split open to reveal the soft, dark purple pulp and numerous seeds
- Taste: Sweet

Stem

- **Branching Pattern:** Numerous, procumbent, and highly scaled branchlets are present.
- Stem Color: Green to reddish-brown
- Surface Texture: Small bristles, hairs, and rough, tiny scales coated

Vernacular name

SL No	Vernacular name	Country	Reference
I.	Phutkola, phutuka,	Assam,	Borgohain <i>et al.</i> , 2022 ^[10]
	рпицика		Sarman K <i>et al.</i> , 2010 ^[13]
11.	Phutk1	Bangladesh	Kader MA <i>et al.</i> , $2023^{[12]}$
III.	Longumpu	Manipur	Ringmichon CL et al., 2010 ^[7]
IV.	"Senduduk"	Malaysia	Zakaria ZA et al., 2006 ^[13]
v	Singapore	Singapore,	Koh HI at al. 2000 [14]
۷.	rhododendron	Britain	Koli 11L et al., 2009
VI.	Ye mu dan	china	Wu ZY et al. [15]
VII.	Malabar	Australia	Ong HC et al. 1999 ^[19]
	melastome	Australia	Ong HC et al., 1999 ^[17]

Taxonomical classification

Kingdom: Plantae Clade: Angiosperms Order: Myrtales Family: Melastomataceae Genus: *Melastoma*

Species: Melastoma malabathricum

Binomial name: Melastoma malabathricum L.

Source: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ *Melastoma_malabathricum* [18]

Cultivation

The species *Melastoma malabathricum* is widespread throughout South and Southeast Asia. It grows quickly and profusely throughout the tropics, especially in moist environments (Wong W., 2008)^[19].

They are the main settlers of pastures, landslides, roadsides, light gaps, damaged habitats, secondary areas, and rivers. This plant is typical of hot, humid, tropical lowlands; it is found only at higher altitudes in tropical regions and is more widely distributed in the north. It favors soil that is open, welldrained, fertile, and rich in humus. This species outcompetes native flora with ease, growing quickly, tolerating shade, having no natural pests, and producing an abundance of seeds with a high rate of germination that result in monospecific stands. It was brought for ornamental purposes to many areas, but since it competes with both wild and cultivated species, it has spread like a weed and caused significant economic harm in one instance (Faravani M *et al.*, 2007) ^[20].

Phytochemical classification

SL No	Phytochemicals	Chemical constituents	Reference
I.	Phenolic compoundsEllagic acid, 1,4,6-tri-O galloyl-β- D-glucose (31a) and 1,2,4,6-tetra- O-galloyl-β-D- glucose(Galloyl Glycosides)		Sari NM <i>et al.</i> , 2018 ^[21] Zheng WJ <i>et al.</i> , 2021 ^[22]
II.	Flavonoids		
III.	Alkaloids	Alkaloids Patriscabratine	
IV.	Tannins	Strictinin, Casuarinin, Ellagitannin and galloyl esters, Corilagin	Mayasari D <i>et al.</i> , 2021 ^[26] , Lee TH <i>et al.</i> , 2022 ^[21]
V.	Steroids	daucosterol, β-sitosterol	Zheng WJ et al., 2021 [22]
VI.	Terpenoids	Saponin, asiatic acid, ursolic acid, 2-hydroxyursolic, α-amyrin, uvaol, betulinic acid, melastomic acid, serrat-14-en-16-one	Zheng WJ et al., 2021 [22].
VII.	Organic esters gallic acid, hexacosanoic acid, 1-octyl decanoate A, dimethyl hexamethoxydiphenate, brevifolincarboxylic acid		Zheng WJ et al., 2021 [22]
VIII.	Protein	nitrogen-containing compounds	Lee TH et al., 2022 [24]
IX.	Carbohydrate Polysaccharide		Lee TH et al., 2022 [24]

Ethnopharmacological uses

SL No	Country	Plant part	Method of preparation/ administration	Medicinal uses	Reference
I.	Manipur, Mizoram India	Leaf (decoction or juice) Bark (decoction or juice)	Fresh or dry leaves Decoction or juice	Cure dysentery and diarrhoea, cuts and wounds, stomach disorders, and fever. The plant's bark is used as a gargle to treat diarrhea and dysentery.	Sharma HK <i>et al.</i> , 2001 ^[27] Ringmichon CL <i>et al.</i> , 2010 ^[8]
П.	Bangladesh	Root Leaf	Decoction or juice	Jaundice is treated with the root juice. Leukorrhea is treated orally with the root juice or water extract of boiling roots. The leaf juice is used to treat a variety of urinary issues and as a diuretic.	Rahmatullah M <i>et al.</i> , 2009 ^[27] Rahmatullah M <i>et al.</i> , 2009 ^[29] Rahmatullah M <i>et al.</i> , 2010 ^[30]

Pharmacological activities

SL no	Pharmacological activity	Plant Part	Types of extract	Assay used	Reference
I.	Antioxidant	Flower Plant Leaves Leaves Plant	Methanol Aqueous Ethanol Aqueous Methanol Methanol Ethanol	DPPH scavenging Activity ABTS Superoxide ORAC FRAP	Susanti D et al., 2008 ^[38] Alnajar ZA et al., 2012 ^[39] akaria ZA et al., 2011 ^[40] Mamat SS et al., 2013 ^[41] Alnajar ZA et al., 2012 ^[39]
II.	Antibacterial	Plant Leaves	Ethanol aqueous	MIC (Disc Diffusion Method) MIC	Alnajar ZA <i>et al.</i> , 2012 ^[39] Khan MM <i>et al.</i> , 2020 ^[42]
III.	Anti-inflammatory	LeavesLeaves	Methanol Methanol	PAF assay TPA (12-O-tetradecanoylphorbol-13- acetate)-induced Mouse Ear Oedema method. The carrageenan- induced paw edema test	Mazura MP et al., 2007 ^[43] Susanti D et al., 2008 ^[38]

		Leaves	Aqueous		Zakaria ZA et al., 2006 [13]
IV.	Antidiabetic	leaves	Methanol	Alpha amylase Alpha glucosidase Streptozotocin induced diabetic rats	Idris M et al., 2022 ^[4]
V.	Wound healing	Leaves	Methanol	Excision wound model Incision wound model	Anbu J <i>et al.</i> , 2008 ^[44]
VI.	Anticoagulant	Leaves	Hot water extract	clot-based assays Activated partial thromboplastin time (aPTT) Prothrombin time (PT) Thrombin time (TT)	Manicam C <i>et al.</i> , 2010 ^[45]
VII.	Anti-pyretic	leaves	aqueous	Brewer's yeast induced pyrexia	Zakaria ZA et al., 2006 [13]
VIII.	Anti diarrhoeal	Leaves	Ethanol	Castor oil induced diarrhoea	Havagiray RC <i>et al.</i> , 2004 ^[46] Karuppasamy Balamurugan KB <i>et al.</i> , 2004 ^[47]
IX.	Antinociceptive	leaves	aqueous	Abdominal constriction test Hot- plate test	Zakaria ZA <i>et al.</i> , 2006 ^[13]

9. Conclusion

This thorough analysis concludes by highlighting the pharmacological, phytochemical, and pharmacognostical characteristics of Melastoma malabathricum and providing insight into its possible therapeutic uses. Numerous phytochemical studies highlight the wide range of bioactive substances found in different plant portions, giving traditional therapeutic uses of the plant a scientific foundation. Melastoma malabathricum extracts and isolated chemicals have also shown a variety of pharmacological properties, which support its pharmacotherapeutic potential in treating a variety of illnesses, such as antidiabetic, oxidative stress, inflammation, antinociceptive, wound healing. Anticoagulant and microbial infections. To confirm its effectiveness and safety for use in humans, more study is necessary to clarify the underlying mechanisms of action, improve extraction techniques, and carry out clinical trials. All things considered, this review emphasizes how important Melastoma *malabathricum* is as a natural chemical source.

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