

Antimicrobial Activity of Essential Oil and Crude Organic Extracts of *Salvia officinalis* L. Leaves from Nepal

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Abstract:-The chemical constituents of essential oil from air-dried leaves of *Salvia officinalis* L. growing in Nepal was determined by gas chromatography couple with mass spectrometry (GC/MS) technique. A total number of twenty-one phytoconstituents were identified representing 99.95% of total oil composition. The major chemical components were camphor (65.18%), camphane (9.73%), eucalyptol or 1,8-cineole (4.72%), 2-nepthalenemethanol (3.85%) and α -pinene (2.33%) whereas the minor chemical components were boreneol (1.45%), eucarvone (1.44%), benezenemethanol (1.36%), viridiflorol (1.23%), o-cymene (1.22%), limonene (1.07%), trans-pinocarveol (0.90%), 2-(3-oxobutyl)-cyclohexanone(0.84%), β -caryophyllene oxide (0.78%), β -pinene (0.78%), m-cymene (0.72%), β -Ocimene (0.71%), 8-hydroxy-p-cymene (0.67%), bornylacetate (0.49%), valerenal (0.40%) and tricylene (0.11%). Since our *S. officinalis* lacks thujone content that poses higher risk of toxicity at high doses, it becomes more favorable to use for the treatment of several diseases in human. On the other hand, bacterial inhibitory activity of essential oil and the three different extracts was determined to evaluate its antibiotic potential using agar well disc diffusion method. The essential oil of *S. officinalis* L. leaves revealed strong antimicrobial potential against both Gram-positive *Staphylococcus aureus*, Gram-negative *Klebsiella pueunmoniae* and *Escherichia coli* bacteria. Among three extracts, the ether extract of *S. officinalis* L. leaves showed strong antimicrobial activity against *Klebsiella pueunmoniae* and *Escherichia coli* but weak against *Staphylococcus aureus*.

Keywords:- *Salvia Officinalis*, Camphor, Camphene, Antimicrobial, Ether, Essential Oil.

I. INTRODUCTION

The genus *Salvia*, commonly known as sage, has numerous common names including garden sage, common sage, kitchen sage, golden sage, culinary sage which comprises more than 1000 species all over the world [1]. *Salvia officinalis* L. belongs to Lamiaceae family and is native to Middle East and Mediterranean areas [1-3]. This medicinal plant is a woody evergreen shrub with strong aroma growing up to 30 cm to 1 m in height. The leaves are greenish grey color, rugose on the upper side, white underneath due to many short soft hairs (trichomes), oblong, ranging in size up to 6.4cm long and 2.5cm wide [4].

The botanical name of sage refers to its medicinal properties as *Salvia* is derived from Latin word *Salvare* which means to heal or care [5]. This plant has been used by tribal communities of Nepal, China, India and Europe as folk medicine for the treatment of bronchitis, cough, asthma, angina, mouth and throat inflammations, depression, excessive sweating, skin diseases, and many other diseases [6-8]. *Salvia* essential oils have been used in the treatment of a wide range of diseases like those of the nervous system, heart and blood circulation, respiratory system, digestive system, and metabolic and endocrine diseases. In addition, sage essential oil has been shown to have carminative, antispasmodic, antiseptic, and astringent properties [9,10]. The essential oil of *Salvia* species has various compositions depending on the genetic, climatic, seasonal, and environmental factors [11]. The essential oil of this species issued as an anticholinesterase [12], antidiabetic [13], anti-inflammatory [14], spasmolytic, antiseptic and astringent [15], antioxidant, antimicrobial, anticancer [16-19], antimutagenic [20], and antiviral [21]. It is also used traditionally in herbal tea food flavoring, flavoring agents in perfumery and cosmetics [22]. Literature evidence have shown that commercial sage oil is generally characterized by thujones, with α -thujone usually predominating (18–43%) over β -thujone (3–8.5%), camphor (4.5–24.5%), 1,8-cineole (5.5–13%), α -humulene (0–12%), α -pinene (1–6.5%), camphene (1.5–7%), and bornyl acetate (2.5% maximum) [23].

Infectious diseases are the major health problem nowadays which account for approximately one half of all loss of human life worldwide. The efficiency of many used antibiotics is being threatened by the emergence of multi drug resistant microorganisms and superbugs [24]. This resistance is largely due to indiscriminate use of antibiotic commonly applied for the treatment of infectious diseases [25]. Some antibiotics have much side effects which limit their uses. Thus, there is urgent need to develop new antimicrobial agents with no or less side effects. Although many synthetic antibiotics have been producing in labs, natural products still cover about 50% of modern antibiotics. Hence, natural products play avital role in new drug development in pharmaceutical areas [26]. Accordingly, *S. officinalis* is a good source of bioactive compounds such as camphor, 1,8-cineole, α -thujone, and β -thujone [27]. However, only very few research works had been carried on *S. officinalis* species grown in Nepal. So, there is no information about its secondary metabolites (essential

oil, organic extracts) and antimicrobial activity. Therefore, the present study aimed to investigate the chemical compositions of essential oil and organic extracts of *S. officinalis* L. leaves grown in Nepal and examine their antimicrobial activities.



Fig. 1: Leaves of *Salvia officinalis* L. plant

II. MATERIAL AND METHODS

2.1 Plant Material

The cultivated leaves of *S. officinalis* L. were collected from Sanobharyang, Kathmandu district of Nepal, which is located in 27° 43'23" N and 85° 17'22" E at about 1300 m above sea level. This medicinal plant was taxonomically identified, and a voucher specimen has been deposited in the Central Department of Botany, Tribhuvan University, Kirtipur, Nepal. The shade dried powdered leaves of *S. officinalis* L. were successively extracted with hexane, ether, ethylacetate and ethanol solvents by cold percolation method to prepare the corresponding organic extracts.

2.2 Phytochemical Profiling

The phytochemicals present in different extracts were subjected to chemical test using the standard protocol following Ciulei I. [28].

2.3 Isolation of Essential Oils

The essential oil was isolated by hydro-distillation method using Clevenger-type distillation apparatus. An amount of 50 gm in three portions of fresh leaves were kept into around bottom flask along with distilled water and round bottom flask was fitted with Clevenger-type distillation apparatus. The content of the flask was heated in heating mantle at boiling temperature and the process was allowed to continue for 4.5 hours and followed by standing for one hour at room temperature. The *S. officinalis* L. leaves essential oil obtained was kept in anhydrous sodium sulphate to remove water and filtered to store in airtight reagent bottle at 4°C for further use.

2.4 Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry (GC/MS) Analysis

The chemical composition of the leaves of *S. officinalis* L. essential oils were analyzed by a gas chromatography (Shimadzu GC 2010) having an Rtx-5 MS column (30m X 0.25mm X 0.25µm) using helium as carrier gas. An amount of 10 µL of the sample diluted with spectroscopic grade acetone (1:100) was injected into the GC inlet under pressure flow control mode maintaining purge flow 3 mL/min after fixing the split ratio at 100. The initial column oven temperature was

set at 90°C and the injection temperature was 200°C. The chemical constituents separated were detected and identified by a mass spectrometer (Shimadzu QP 2010 Plus). During the analysis, the ion source and the interface temperature was set at 200°C and 250°C respectively. The detector voltage was 0.70 kV, scanning time was from 0 to 48 min and scan speed was 2000 with m/z range of 40 to 400. Identification of the oil components was based on their retention indices determined by reference to a homologous series of n-alkanes, and by comparison of their mass spectral fragmentation patterns with those reported in NIST 05 and FFNSC 1.3 libraries as references.

2.5 Antimicrobial activity

Bacterial inhibitory activity of the extracts is determined to evaluate its antibiotic potential. Inhibition of bacterial growth was tested using agar well disc diffusion method following Dingel et al. [29]. The test microorganisms were used in this antibacterial assay included Gram-positive *Staphylococcus aureus* (ATCC 25923) and Gram-negative *Escherichia coli* (ATCC 25922) and *Klebsiella pneumoniae* (ATCC 20063). These standard bacteria were collected from Sukra Raj Tropical Infectious Hospital, Teku, Kathmandu, Nepal. The bacteria strains were grown in a nutrient broth at 37°C, maintained nutrient agar slants at 10°C and standardized to 0.5 Mc Farland (10⁶ CFU/ml). The different extracts of *S. officinalis* L. leaves (100 mg) were dissolved in 1mL dimethyl sulphoxide (DMSO) for this activity test. The inoculums containing 10⁶ CFU/ml bacteria spread on the solid Muller Hinton Agar (MHA) plates with a sterile cotton swabs moistened with bacteria suspension and dried it. The wells were made in the incubated petri plates with the help of sterile cork borer of diameter of 6 mm and were labeled properly and the plant extracts were loaded into the respective wells with the help of micropipette. An antibiotic erythromycin (100 µg/ml working concentration) was used as a positive control in the separate well. The petri plates were left for few minutes to diffuse plant extracts in media and incubated overnight at 37°C for 24 hours. The diameter of the resulting zone of inhibition (mm) of growth was measured using measuring scale. All the experiments were carried out in triplicate.

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

3.1 Phytochemical Profiling

The different classes of phytochemicals present in hexane, ether, ethyl acetate and ethanol extracts of *S. officinalis* leaves were tabulated in the Table 1. A wide range of constituents include alkaloids, reducing sugar, glycosides, saponins, coumarins, flavonoids, quinones, tannins, steroids, terpenes/terpenoids were found. Volatile oils were absent in ethylacetate and ethanol extracts of *S. officinalis* leaves.

Table 1: Classes of Phytochemicals from Ether, Ethylacetate and Ethanol Extracts of *S. officinalis* Leaves

Note: + sign indicates presence and - sign indicates absence

Phytochemical screening revealed that hexane extract of *S. officinalis* leaves had volatile oils, polyphenols and tannins but lacked reducing sugars and glycosides. Ether extract

contained volatile oils, polyphenols, terpenoids, quinones, flavonoids and tannins. Hence, phytochemical profiling ascertained the presence of the different types of potential bioactive phyto-constituents from this medicinal plant.

3.2 Gas Chromatography-Mass Spectrometry Analysis

The percentage yield of essential oil obtained by hydro-distillation of *S. officinalis* L. leaves was quantified and the amount of essential oil was found to be 1.57 % (v/w). The essential oil obtained from *S. officinalis* L. leaves was pale yellow color, slightly viscous with sweet strong camphoraceous odour. The gas chromatography-mass spectrometry (GC/MS) of the essential oil of *S. officinalis* L. leaves from Nepal revealed the presence of twenty-one phytoconstituents in chromatogram representing 99.95% of the total oil composition shown in Fig. 2. The main phytoconstituents components were camphor (65.18%), camphane (9.73%), eucalyptol or 1,8-Cineole (4.72%), 2-naphthalenemethanol (3.85%) and α -pinene (2.33%). The minor phytoconstituents were borneol (1.45%), eucarvone (1.44%), benzenemethanol (1.36%), viridiflorol (1.23%), o-cymene (1.22%), Limonene (1.07%), trans-pinocarveol (0.90%), 2-(3-oxobutyl) cyclohexanone (0.84%), β -caryophyllene oxide (0.78%), β -pinene (0.78%), m-cymene (0.72%), β -Ocimene (0.71%), 8-hydroxy-p-cymene (0.67%), bornyl acetate (0.49%), valerenal (0.40%) and tricyclene (0.11%). The phytoconstituents present in the essential oils of leaves were tabulated below with their gram molecular weight, % peak area, retention time and identification method in Table 2.

As shown in Table 2, the identified compounds were eight monoterpene hydrocarbons, five oxygenated monoterpene hydrocarbons, two monoterpene alcohols, one sesquiterpene alcohol, two monoterpene ketones, one monoterpene ester, one sesquiterpene aldehyde and one sesquiterpenoid epoxide. In this chemical profile, camphor was found as the major component with an abundance

of 65.18%. The dominant chemical compound like thujone from other varieties of *S. officinalis* was not detected in our essential oil from *S. officinalis* L. leaves. As compared to the literature evidences, our chemical profile results were different in the percentage compositions of phytoconstituents and chemical compounds from previously published works on GC/MS analysis of *S. officinalis* L. leaves essential oil from many other different country region such as Tunisia [30], Abha (Saudi Arabia) [31], Kashmir (India) [32], Syria [33], Albania I [23], Mexico [23], California [23] and Albania II [34] as tabulated in Table 3. The most abundant principal phytochemical components were camphor, camphene, eucalyptol (1,8-cineole), α -pinene, bornyl acetate, borneol and β -pinene in *S. officinalis* L. leaves essential oils from these different country regions. But the phytoconstituents like 2-naphthalenemethanol, benzenemethanol, trans-pinocarveol, 2-(3-oxobutyl) cyclohexanone, 8-hydroxy-p-cymene, and valerenal are not detected in those essential oils from above mentioned different country regions. The phytoconstituents like α - and β -thujone were present in the essential oils from these different country regions but thujones were absent in our chemical profile of *S. officinalis* essential oil.

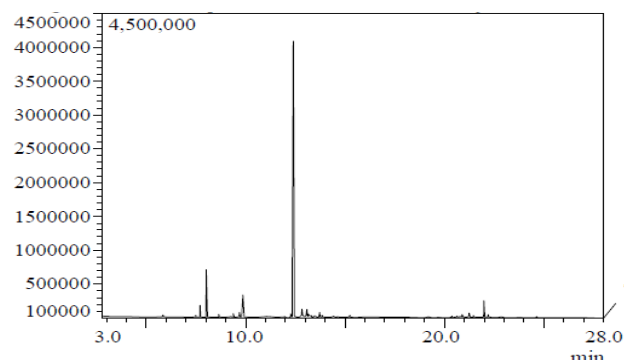


Fig.2: GC/MS chromatogram of essential oil of *S. officinalis* L. leaves

Figure 3: GC/MS chromatogram of essential oil of *S. officinalis* L. leaves (magnified).

Table 2: Chemical Constituents of Essential oils of *S. officinalis* L. leaves from Nepal.

S. No.	Chemical constituents	Molecular Formula	Retention Time	Area %	IM
1	Tricyclene	C ₁₀ H ₁₆	7.433	0.11	RT, MS
2	α -pinene	C ₁₀ H ₁₆	7.692	2.33	RT, MS
3	Camphene	C ₁₀ H ₁₆	8.033	9.73	RT, MS
4	β -pinene	C ₁₀ H ₁₆	8.667	0.78	RT, MS
5	β -ocimene	C ₁₀ H ₁₆	9.383	0.71	RT, MS
6	p-cymene	C ₁₀ H ₁₄	9.633	0.72	RT, MS
7	o-cymene	C ₁₀ H ₁₄	9.700	1.22	RT, MS
8	Limonene	C ₁₀ H ₁₆	9.792	1.07	RT, MS
9	Eucalyptol(1,8-Cineole)	C ₁₀ H ₁₈ O	9.875	4.74	RT, MS
10	trans-Pinocarveol	C ₁₀ H ₁₆ O	12.300	0.90	RT, MS
11	Camphor	C ₁₀ H ₁₆ O	12.442	65.18	RT, MS
12	Borneol	C ₁₀ H ₁₈ O	12.875	1.40	RT, MS
13	Benzenemethanol	C ₁₀ H ₁₄ O	13.142	1.36	RT, MS
14	8-hydroxy-p-cymene	C ₁₀ H ₁₄ O	13.217	0.67	RT, MS
15	Eucarvone	C ₁₀ H ₁₄ O	13.783	1.44	RT, MS
16	Bornyl acetate	C ₁₂ H ₂₀ O ₂	15.308	0.49	RT, MS

17	β -caryophyllene oxide	C ₁₅ H ₂₄ O	20.925	0.78	RT, MS
18	Viridiflorol	C ₁₅ H ₅₆ O	21.25	1.23	RT, MS
19	Valerenal	C ₁₅ H ₂₂ O	21.492	0.40	RT, MS
20	2-naphthalenemethanol	C ₁₅ H ₂₆ O	22.008	3.85	RT, MS
21	2-(3-oxobutyl)-cyclohexanone	C ₁₀ H ₁₆ O ₂	22.217	0.84	RT, MS
Total				99.95	

RT=Retention Time, MS=Mass Spectrometry, IM = Identification Method

Table 3: Chemical Constituents of Essential oil of *S. officinalis* L. leaves from different country regions.

Chemical constituents	Area % [a]	Area % [b]	Area % [c]	Area % [d]	Area % [e]	Area % [f]	Area % [g]	Area % [h]	Area % [i]
Tricyclene	0.11	-	-	-	-	0.2	0.1	0.2	0.3
α -pinene	2.33	0.84	1.15	7.69	3.70	5.0	2.4	5.2	6.2
Camphene	9.73	0.78	2.58	6.11	2.60	5.2	3.5	5.3	4.2
β -pinene	0.78	0.85	2.06	28.33	6.00	4.1	2.6	1.2	2.6
β -ocimene	0.71	0.71	-	-	-	0.1	0.1	-	-
p-cymene	0.72	-	0.36	1.19	0.60	0.6	0.2	0.2	trace
o-cymene	1.22	-	-	-	-	1.22	1.22	1.3	-
Limonene	1.07	1.43	-	-	-	1.5	1.7	2.2	-
Eucalyptol(1,8-Cineole)	4.74	14.14	15.0	7.76	62.0	26.9	15.5	11.9	27.5
trans-Pinocarveol	0.90	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Camphor	65.18	25.14	20.3	36.97	8.00	12.8	14.8	21.4	11.5
Borneol	1.40	2.81	2.16	18.38	5.00	1.2	1.00	1.7	trace
Benzenemethanol	1.36	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8-hydroxy-p-cymene	0.67	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Eucarvone	1.44	1.44	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Bornyl acetate	0.49	1.05	1.6	2.1	-	1.1	0.5	1.8	-
β -caryophyllene oxide	0.78	0.06	-	-	-	0.1	0.2	-	-
Viridiflorol	1.23	7.98	9.9	2.16	-	2.0	7.4	1.5	-
Valerenal	0.40	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2-naphthalenemethanol	3.85	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
2-(3-oxobutyl)-cyclohexanone	0.84	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
α -thujone	-	18.83	14.9	40.45	1.38	17.2	18.8	27.4	1.1
β -thujone	-	4.46	5.68	4.97	0.72	3.8	4.4	6.0	1.2

Note: [a]=Nepal, [b]=Tunisia, [c]= Abha(Saudi Arabia, [d]=Kashmir, [e]=Syria, [f]= AlbaniaI, [g]=Mexico, [h]=California, and [i]= Albania II

According to the literature, the yield and the chemical composition of *S. officinalis* essential oils depend on various factors such as region, environmental conditions, season, genetic background and plant parts used for essential oil extraction [35-38]. The proportion of oxygenated monoterpenes, such as camphor, 1,8-cineole, α -thujone, and β -thujone, is considered to indicate the quality of the extracted oil [24]. According to ISO 9909, the phytoconstituents such as α -pinene, camphene, limonene, 1,8-cineole, thujone isomers, camphor, bornyl acetate, and α -humulene are standardized in the essential oils of *S. officinalis* L. for its medicinal application. [24].

One previous report investigated the chemical diversity of southeast European populations of Dalmatian sage, identified four distinct chemotypes (A-D) group. Chemotype A was represented by the high content of α -thujone and camphor, along with the low levels of β -thujone, while Chemotype B was characterized by the high levels of α -thujone and α -humulene, but camphor was detected only in low amounts. Chemotype C was represented by high concentration of both isomers of thujone, along with camphor whereas chemotype D was characterized by the high

percentage of camphor and β -pinene, and by the low abundance of α - and β -thujone [39]. Hence, it was clear that our sample of *S. officinalis* complied with the chemotypes D of Dalmatian sage, as both isomers of thujone were not detectable while the content of camphor was dominant (65%). However, it is expected that the plant's response to the different climatic and environmental conditions leads to the huge variance in their secondary metabolites. The essential oil shows a very good medicinal potential due to presence of high concentration of camphor. Camphor is today mostly used in the form of inhalants and of camphorated oil, a preparation of 19% or 20% camphor in a carrier oil, for the home treatment of cold sand as a major active ingredient of liniments and balms used as topical analgesics [40].

Besides, standardized essential oil extract of *Salvia* (sage) have shown many health benefits to humans including cognitive effect in healthy young adults [41]. Although the normal usage of sage is regarded as safe, the use of sage in an inordinate amount might induce harmful effect due to the high content of thujone [42]. Many varieties of *S. officinalis* found around the globe contain relatively much higher concentration of thujone posing a greater risk of toxicity [43]. Even that the

excessive usage of sage as a treatment of human health diseases is greatly concerned, our *S. officinalis* without thujone content, becomes more favorable to use.

3.3 Antimicrobial Analysis

The capability of the essential oil and organic extracts of *S. officinalis* L. leaves to inhibit bacteria was given in Table 4. The result obtained from the agar disc diffusion method demonstrated that the essential oil of *S. officinalis* L. leaves had high bioactivity against Gram-positive *Staphylococcus aureus*, Gram-negative *Klebsiella pneumoniae* and Gram-negative *Escherichia coli* with large inhibition zones (11, 10, and 10mm respectively) compared with positive control erythromycin (6mm). The ether extract of *S. officinalis* L. leaves showed strong antimicrobial activity against *K. pneumoniae* and *E. coli* with large inhibition zones (10 and 10mm, respectively) and moderate activity against *S. aureus* microorganism (7 mm). Ethyl acetate extract showed weak activity towards Gram-positive as well as Gram-negative bacteria. Ethanol extract showed moderate to low activity against *S. aureus*, *K. pneumoniae* and *E. coli* with inhibition zones (8, 7 and 6mm, respectively). The antibacterial activity showed by the *S. officinalis* leaves extracts could be attributed to the presence of some classes of secondary metabolites such as volatile oil, polyphenols, terpenoids, quinones, flavonoids and

Table 4: Antimicrobial Analysis of Different Extracts and Essential Oil of *S. officinalis* against Microorganisms

S.N.	Plant Extracts	Micro organisms	Antimicrobial Activity, ZOI (mm)	
			Erythromycin	<i>S. officinalis</i>
1	Ether	<i>S. aureus</i>	6	7
		<i>K. pneumoniae</i>	6	10
		<i>E. coli</i>	6	10
2	Ethyl acetate	<i>S. aureus</i>	6	7
		<i>K. pneumoniae</i>	6	6
		<i>E. coli</i>	6	6
3	Ethanol	<i>S. aureus</i>	6	8
		<i>K. pneumoniae</i>	6	7
		<i>E. coli</i>	6	6
4	Essential oil	<i>S. aureus</i>	6	11
		<i>K. pneumoniae</i>	6	10
		<i>E. coli</i>	6	10

IV. CONCLUSIONS

In the present study, we have extracted essential oil from the leaves of a medicinal plant, *S. officinalis* located in Nepal, analyzed their chemical compositions and assessed their antimicrobial activity. Comparing the results of our study with other samples collected from different parts of world revealed some significant similarities and differences in dominant compositions of the medicinal plants. We infer that the

geographical features and environmental conditions influence the compositions of secondary metabolites in the plants. Our study revealed that camphor is dominant bioactive phytoconstituents of *S. officinalis* leaves while thujones are missing. Due to this reason, *S. officinalis* medicinal plant may represent a natural, safe, and effective source for the treatment of many human diseases. With the increase in pharmacological knowledge on the beneficial effects of phytoconstituents of *S. officinalis*, we believe the possibility in the development of novel natural drugs to prevent, control, and treat many health problems such as diabetes, Alzheimer and cancer.

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