

A CRITICAL AYURVEDIC LITERARY REVIEW OF MEDICINAL PLANT *ROHISHA*
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ABSTRACT

Rohisha (*Cymbopogon martinii* (Roxb.)Wats.) is a species of grass in the genus *Cymbopogon*(lemon grasses) belongs to poaceae family. It is a perennial herb, sweet scented grass, occurs wild in dry localities and cultivated in many parts of India. *Cymbopogon martinii* (Lemon grass) native to India and Indo-China but widely cultivated in many places for its aromatic oil. It is best known by the common names Palmarosa, Indian geranium, Ginger grass, Rosha and Rusha grass. The references of *Rohisha* can be seen in various *Samhitas* & *Nighantus* where the plant is indicated in cough, rhinitis, hypogalactia, rheumatoid arthritis, skin diseases, hairfall, loss of appetite, indigestion, pain, infections, fever, gouty arthritis, bleeding disorders, throat infections, urine retention etc all are treated with this plant. The present literature review helps to bridge traditional knowledge with modern science by systematically documenting the traditional uses, properties and efficacy which can lead to new treatments and researches.

KEYWORDS: *Rohisha*, *Cymbopogon martinii*, Aromatic oil, *Samhitas*, *Nigahntus*.**INTRODUCTION**

Ayurveda, a traditional medical system which provides the knowledge of medicinal plants that are used in many diseases. According to *Ayurveda* every drug on the Earth is useful and very important. There are various *Samhitas* and *Nighantus* which give importance to drugs, its uses and its characteristics for better treatment. The need for *Ayurvedic* medications is increasing day by day in present times due to less toxicity and fewer side effects. It is imperative to discover the plant sources which are easily available, accessible, cost effective that are useful for humankind. *Rohisha* (*Cymbopogon martinii*(Roxb.)Wats.) is one of the plant which has various medicinal properties. In Telugu, it is known as Kamakchi-kassuvu, Kachi gaddi, Nimma gaddi; *Rohisha* in Sanskrit, it is perennial herb, sweet scented grass which grows in many parts of India and it is also cultivated due to its essential oil. The medicinal properties of *Rohisha* are *Katu-Tikta ras*, *Katu vipaka*, *Ushna virya* and it acts as *Kapha-pittahara*, *Vatahara*. It

is used in the treatment of *Kasa*, *Swasa*, *Pratishaya*, *Stanyakshaya*, *Amavata*, *Charmaroga*, *Khalitya*, *Aruci*, *Agnimandya*, *Ajirna*, *Visuchika*, *Shula*, *Krimi*, *Hridaybalya*, *Vatarakta*, *Raktavikaras*, *Mutraghata*, *Jwara*, *Kantarogas*, *Raktapitta*. The Research studies showed that *Rohisha* contains geranium abundantly present in the leaves. Many research studies showed that *Cymbopogon martinii* exhibits antimicrobial, antifungal, antiviral, antihelminthic, antioxidant, antidiabetic, anti-inflammatory, cardioprotective, mosquito repellent activities. The knowledge about *Rohisha* is mentioned in various classical texts where scholars can collect the information. This Literary review is an attempt made to consolidate the *ayurvedic* literature of *Rohisha* (*Cymbopogon martinii* (Roxb.)Wats.) together for easy reference in future use.

AIM AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of this study is to conduct a literary review of various *Ayurvedic* texts to obtain information about

Rohisha. The objective of this research is to describe the references, synonyms, rasa-panchaka and vargas according to different Acharyas mentioned in *Samhitas* and *Nighantus*.

METHODOLOGY

A Systematic literature search was conducted by using traditional ayurvedic literature repositories such as *Samhitas*, *Nighantus*, Pharmacopoeias, recent *Dravyaguna* texts and research articles.

Botanical name

Cymbopogon martinii(Roxb.)Wats.

Family

Poaceae

Vernacular names^[1,2]

Sanskrit: Rohisha, Katruna

English: Rosha grass, Rusa grass, Palmarosa

Telugu: Kamakchi-kassuvu, Kachi gaddi, Nimma gaddi

Hindi : Gandhabel, Rusa ghas, Mirchagandh, Rohis, Musel

Punjab: Agya ghass

Bengali: Agya ghas, Gandhabena

Gujarat: Ronsodo, Rauns, Rondso

Marathi: Rohish gavatt, gavatt

Tamil: Kavattampillu, Munkilpul, Curaippul

Malayalam: Sambharapullu

Kannada: Harehullu

Taxonomical classification^[22]

Class - Euisetopsida

Sub-class - Magnoliidae

Superorder - Liliales

Order - Poales

Family - Poaceae

Genus - *Cymbopogon*

Species - *martinii*

Common name - Palmarosa

Distribution & Habitat^[2,3]

Grows wild in dry localities and is cultivated in many parts of India. Punjab, Bihar, Bengal, Rajasthan, abundant in Deccan and Karnataka. A tufted, robust, perennial, sweet scented grass with numerous stiff stems, yellow or greenish yellow in colour grows 1.5 to 3.5 m high. It is a best natural source of geraniol.

Botanical description^[2]

Perennial, sweet scented grass(lemon grass).

- Root - Short, stout and woody, fibrous, many clumps arise from root stumps.
- Culm - Erect, terete, smooth shiny, up to 6mm in diameter, internodes 5 to 16 cm long, solid.
- Leaves- The leaves are pleasant smelling, leaf blades are linear-lanceolate or lanceolate tapering to long filiform acuminate point, cordate and amplexicaul at base, up to 50 cm long and 3.5cm broad; upper leaves are smaller, leaf surface glabrous, margin scabrid; midrib prominent and protruded on the lower surface; leaf sheath shorter than the internodes, glabrous, striate, auriculate, tight and clasping the culm, ligules membranous, 2 to 3 cm long.
- Flowers- Flowers are small, orange or reddish, hermaphrodite or male, stamens-3, anthers 1 or 2 mm long, style 2, stigma pilose.
- Fruit - Caryopsis (a type of dry, one seeded fruit where the fruit wall is fused with seed coat)
- Seeds - Mature seeds are brown, fine, hairy and easily disposed by air.

Fig.1: Whole plant a & b



(a)



(b)



Fig.2: Stem & Roots.



Fig.3: Stem.



Fig.4: Leaves.



Fig.5: Inflorescence.



Fig.6: Seeds.



Fig.7: Slips.

Chemical constituents^[1,2]

Geraniol, geranyl acetate, citronellol, geranyl butyrate, myrcene, α & β pinene, carvone, carveol, perillyl alcohol, citronellol, farnesol, limonene, dihemiacetal

bismonoterpenoid, caryophyllene oxide, tricyclene, α -terpineol, β -terpineol, dihydrocarvone, linalool, methylheptenone, 2-nonanol.

Synonyms

Synonyms mentioned in various *Nighantus*

Synonyms	B.P.N	M.P.N	D.N	K.N	So.N	R.N	Ma.N	A.M	Sh.N
<i>Bhuti</i>		+	+		+	+		+	
<i>Bhutikam</i>	+	+		+	+	+		+	
<i>Bhumika</i>		+		+					
<i>Binduchittam</i>				+			+	+	
<i>Dhyamaka</i>			+	+	+	+	+	+	
<i>Devajagandha</i>	+								
<i>Devadagadhkam</i>				+	+				
<i>Dhyamapaura</i>	+								
<i>Dhoopagandhika</i>	+								
<i>Deergha rohisha truna</i>						+			
<i>Davadagdhakam</i>				+		+		+	
<i>Dagdha</i>				+	+				
<i>Katruna</i>	+	+		+	+	+		+	+
<i>Kutruna</i>						+			
<i>Mudhgala</i>				+	+	+			
<i>Malatrana</i>					+				
<i>Poura</i>	+	+	+		+			+	
<i>Puti</i>				+		+			
<i>Pouta</i>				+					
<i>Rohisha</i>	+		+	+	+	+		+	
<i>Rohisha truna</i>									+
<i>Rohisha ghasa</i>		+							
<i>Ramkarpura</i>									+

<i>Sougandhika</i>	+								
<i>Shyamaka</i>	+	+	+	+	+	+		+	
<i>Sakala</i>			+		+				
<i>Sarala</i>		+							
<i>Shabala</i>				+	+				
<i>Syathkamalantham</i>							+		
<i>Truna</i>		+	+	+	+	+		+	
<i>Vyapaka</i>		+							
<i>Vishagandhika</i>				+					
<i>Vrushagandhikam</i>							+		
<i>Yugmaka</i>		+							

Classification of Rohisha from various Ayurvedic texts

SNO	Classical texts	Varga
1.	<i>Charaka samhita</i>	<i>Stanyajanana mahakashya varga</i>
2.	<i>Bhavaprakasha nighantu</i>	<i>Guduchyadi varga</i>
3.	<i>Raja nighantu</i>	<i>Shalmalyadi varga</i>
4.	<i>Kaiyadeva nighantu</i>	<i>Aoushadi varga</i>
5.	<i>Dhanwantari nighantu</i>	<i>Guduchyadi varga</i>
6.	<i>Shodala nighantu</i>	<i>Guduchyadi varga, Karaviradi varga</i>
7.	<i>Madanapala nighantu</i>	<i>Abhayadi prathama varga</i>
8.	<i>Madanadi nighantu</i>	<i>Eladi gana</i>
9.	<i>Adarsha nighantu</i>	<i>Trunadi varga</i>
10.	<i>Priya nighantu</i>	<i>Sharadi varga</i>
11.	<i>Abhidana manjari</i>	<i>Eladi varga</i>

Rasapanchaka of Rohisha from various Nighantus & API^[4,7,6,5,8,9,2]

Rasa panchaka	B.P.N	M.P.N	K.N	R.N	Ma.N	P.N	A.P.I
Rasa	Kashaya, tikta	Tikta, kashaya	Kashaya, tikta	Katu, tikta	Kashaya	Tikta	Katu, tikta
Guna	-	-	-	-	-	-	Laghu, ruksha, tikshna
Virya	-	Ushna	Ushna	Ushna	-	Ushna	Ushna
Vipaka	Katu	Katu	Katu	-	Katu	Katu	Katu
Dosha Karma	-	-	Kapha-pittahara	Kapha-vatahara	Kapha-pittaghna	Vata-kaphahara	Kapha- vata shamaka, Pittahara

Karmas of Rohisha according to various Nighantus

SNO	Nighantus	Karma	Indications
1.	<i>Madanadi Nighantu</i>	<i>Kapha-pittaghna, Jwaraghna</i>	-
2.	<i>Dhanwantari Nighantu</i>	<i>Kapha-pittahara, Kasaghna, Swasaghna, Shulaghna, Hridroga shamana, Raktapittahara</i>	<i>Swasa, Kasa, Shula, Visuchika, Ajirna, Hridroga</i>
3.	<i>Raja Nighantu</i>	<i>Kaphahara</i>	<i>Shastra-shalyadidoshaghna, Balagrahadoshavinashanam, Vishavikaras, Vrana, Kshata, Butagraha</i>
4.	<i>Madhava dravyaguna</i>	<i>Vata-kaphahara, Vishahara</i>	-
5.	<i>Kaiyadeva Nighantu</i>	<i>Kapaha-pittahara</i>	<i>Raktavikaras, Kandu, Hridroga, Aruchi, Krimi, Kasa, Swasa, Jwara, Shula, Ajirna</i>
6.	<i>Bhavaprakasha Nighantu</i>	-	<i>Hridroga, Kantarogas, Raktapitta, Shula, Kasa, Swasa, Kaphaja jwara</i>
7.	<i>Madanapala Nighantu</i>	-	<i>Vata-pitta vikaras, Raktavikaras, Swasa, Kaphaja jwara</i>

8.	<i>Shankara Nighantu</i>	<i>Kapha-vatahara</i>	<i>Hridroga, Kantarogas, Kasa, Shula, Raktapitta, Kapharoga, Jwara</i>
9.	<i>Priya Nighantu</i>	<i>Vata-kaphahara, Swasahara, Kasahara, Shulahara</i>	-

Parts used

Panchanga (whole plant)

Dosage

Decoction : 50 to 100 ml

Oil : 1 to 3 drops

Visishta yogas

Bala taila, Mashabaladi kwatha churna, Rohishadi kwatha, Manashiladidhuma, Dhanwantari ghrita, Panchagavya ghrita.

Classical references in Samhitas and Nighantus^[10-21,32-42]

SNO	Reference	Name of the Drug	Yoga/Amayika Prayoga/ Context	Indications
1.	CS.Su.4/17	<i>Katruna</i>	Stanyajanana Mahakashya varga	-
2.	CS.Su.5/21	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Dhumapana	<i>Kapharoga</i>
3.	CS.Ci.3/267	<i>Rohisha</i>	Agurvadya taila	<i>Sita jwara, Avagaha, Pariseka</i>
4.	CS.Ci.10/21	<i>Rohisha</i>	Mahapanchagavya ghritam	<i>Apasmara, Unmada, Gulma, Arshas, Kamala, Pandu, Vishama jwara, Sotha.</i>
5.	CS.Ci.12/65	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Saileyadi taila	<i>Vatika swayathu</i>
6.	CS.Ci.18/73	<i>Rohisha</i>	Manahshiladi dhuma-varti	<i>Vataja kasa</i>
7.	CS.Ci.23/12	<i>Rohisha</i>	Sthavara visha	-
8.	CS.Ci.23/54	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Mrutasanjivana -agada	<i>Visha, Bhuta, Krimi, Kaarmana, Alakshmi, Mantra, Duswapna, Stridosha, Akalamarna.</i>
9.	CS.Ci.23/78	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Mahagandhahasti agada	<i>Vishamajwara, Visha, Netraroga, Ajirna, Arbuda, Dadru, Pama, Kandu, Visuc hika, Atisara, Kandavisha, Moolavisha, Sarpavisha, Lutavisha, Mushika visha.</i>
10.	CS.Ci.25/117	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Savarnikara yoga	<i>Vrana, Varnya</i>
11.	CS.Ci.28/154	<i>Dhyama</i>	Bala taila	<i>Swasa, Kasa, Jwara, Hikka, Vamana, Sosha, Gulma, Rajayakshma, Urahkshata, Pliharoga, Dathukshaya, Apasmara, Alakshmi</i>
12.	CS.Si.4/4	<i>Rohisha</i>	Bilva taila	<i>Sarvavata vikaras</i>
13.	S.S.Su.38/24	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Eladi gana	<i>Kandu, Pidaka, Kota, Visha</i>
14.	S.S.Ci.37/19	<i>Rohisha</i>	Bhutikadi taila basti	<i>Sarvavata vikaras</i>
15.	S.S.Ka.2/48	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Ajeya ghrita	<i>Visha</i>
16.	S.S.Ka.2/51	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Dushi -vishari- agada	<i>Visha</i>
17.	S.S.Ka.5/66	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Tarkshya agada	<i>Visha</i>
18.	S.S.Ka.6/16	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Mahasugandhi agada	<i>Visha, Bhagnaskandha, Vivruthaksham.</i>
19.	S.S.U.26/22	<i>Rohisha</i>	Paste of Trivrit, Kustha, Shrungheshta, Devadaru, Rohisha pounded with kshara and lavana, Slightly heated should be applied on head.	<i>Kaphaja shiroroga</i>
20.	AH.Su.15/43	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Eladi gana	<i>Visha, Kandu, Pidaka, Kota, Varnaprasadaka.</i>

21.	AH.Su.21/14	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Snigdha- dhumapana dravyas	-
22.	AH.Ci.1/62	<i>Katruna</i>	Intake of Kwatha of Katruna and 11 ingredients cures mentioned indications.	<i>Kapha-vataajwara, Shtiva, Kukshi, Hridya-parshwavedanahara, Kantaroga, Asyaswayathu, Kasa, Swasa</i>
23.	A.H.Ci.1/139	<i>Rohisha</i>	Abhyangadi prayoga	-
24.	A.H.Ci.1/163	<i>Dhyama</i>	Aparajitha dhupa	<i>Vishama jwara</i>
25.	A.H.Ci.12/22	<i>Rohisha</i>	Dhanvantara ghrita	<i>Prameha, Pidika, Kasa, Swasa, Kustha, Unmada, Apsmara</i>
26.	A.H.Ci.17/23	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Sarvanga sopha chikitsa	-
27.	A.H.Ci.21/79	<i>Dhyama</i>	Bala taila	<i>Kasa, Swasa, Jwara, Chardi, Gulma, Murcha, Kshatakshaya, Pliharoga, Sosha, Apasmara, Alakshmi.</i>
28.	A.H.Ka.4/54	<i>Rohisha</i>	Anuvasana basti	<i>Vata rogas</i>
29.	A.H.Ka.5/19	<i>Rohisha</i>	-	<i>Niruha basti vyapath</i>
30.	A.H.Ka.6/2	<i>Rohisha</i>	Prasastha aushadha	-
31.	A.H.U.3/45	<i>Katruna</i>	The warm water processed with Katruna and other 18 ingredients are used for bathing the child to cure graha karana rogas.	<i>Graha rogas</i>
32.	A.H.U.7/21	<i>Rohisha</i>	Mahapanchagavya ghrita	<i>Jwara, Apasmara, Bhagandhara, Kasa, Pandu, Kamala</i>
33.	A.H.U.22/85	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Putiasya-urdhvaguda chikitsa	<i>Mukha rogas</i>
34.	A.H.U.35/39	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Dusi-vishari agada	<i>Dusi visha</i>
35.	A.H.U.37/42	<i>Rohisha</i>	Mushroom growing on Elephants dung and root of Rohish are made into paste with decoction of sleshmataka, then rolled into pills is applied externally.	<i>Vrischika visha</i>
36.	A.H.U.37/73	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Mandara agada, Gandhamadana agada	<i>Luta visha</i>
37.	Sa.S.Ma.2/43	<i>Rohisha</i>	Katphaladi kwatha.	<i>Kasa, Swasa, Jwara, Sleshma, Galagraaha</i>
38.	Sa.S.U.5/47	<i>Rohisha</i>	Guduchyadi taila	<i>Vata vikaras</i>
39.	Sa.S.U.8/36	<i>Rohisha</i>	Mashadi nasyam	<i>Pakshaghata, Kampa, Arditavata, Manyastambha, Apabahuka.</i>
40.	Sa.S.U.11/68	<i>Rohisha</i>	Shiroroga yoga	<i>Kaphaja shiroruja</i>
41.	B.P.Ma.1/109	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Pachanakashaya yoga	<i>Jwara</i>
42.	B.P.Ma.1/649	<i>Rohisha</i>	Raktashtivisannipatsya chikitsa yoga	<i>Sannipata jwara, Kshatashtivi</i>
43.	B.P.Ma.1/790	<i>Rohisha</i>	Mahashadgunathakra taila	<i>Daha, Sita jwara</i>
44.	B.P.Ma.24/242	<i>Bhutika</i>	Amashayagata vata	<i>Amashayagata vata</i>
45.	B.P.Ma.38/81	<i>Rohisha</i>	Gokshuradichurna gutika	<i>Prameha, Sotha, Arshas, Pliharoga, Pandu roga, Shula, Udaravikaras, Halimaka.</i>
46.	B.P.Ma.38/96	<i>Rohisha</i>	Dhanvantara ghrita	<i>Prameha</i>
47.	B.P.Ma.49/19	<i>Sougandhikam</i>	Kumbhikadya taila	<i>Nadivrana, Vrana</i>
48.	B.P.Ma.51/25	<i>Sougandhikam</i>	Nilikamala, Shweta- Kamala, Kumuda, Sougandhika churnas are applied as pralepa cures upadamsha.	<i>Upadamsha</i>
49.	B.P.Ma.67/81	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	-	<i>Dushi visha</i>
50.	Ma.Ni.31/3	<i>Dhyamaka</i>	Eladigana	<i>Kapha-pittaghna, Jaragham</i>

51.	D.Ni. 1/78	<i>Katruna</i>	Guduchyadi varga	Kaphapittahara, Swasakasagham, Hridroga shamana, Shulaghna, Raktavikaras, Visuchika, Ajirna.
52.	So.Ni.1/152	<i>Katruna</i>	Guduchyadi varga	-
53.	So.Ni.4/507	<i>Rohisha</i>	Karaviradi varga	-
54.	Ma.D.1/124	<i>Katruna</i>	Vividhaushadi varga	Vatakaphahara, Vishahara, Hridya
55.	R.Ni.8/97	<i>Kutruna</i>	Shalmalyadi varga	<i>Shashtra-shalyadidoshaghna, Balagrahadoshavinashanam</i>
56.	R.Ni.8/99	<i>Deerga Rohisha</i>	Shalmalyadi varga	<i>Butagraha, Vishavikaras, Vrana, Kshata, Kaphavata rogas</i>
57.	Ka.Ni.1/1245	<i>Katruna</i>	Aushadivarga	<i>Raktavikaras, Kandu, Hridroga, Aruchi, Krimi, Kasa, Swasa, Jwara, Shula, Ajirna</i>
58.	B.Pa.Ni.4/145	<i>Katruna</i>	Guduchyadi varga	<i>Hridroga, Kantarogas, Raktapitta, Shula, Kasa, Swasa, Kaphaja jwara</i>
59.	Ma.P.Ni.1/204	<i>Rohisha</i>	Abhayadi Prathama varga	<i>Vata-pitta vikaras, Raktavikaras, Swasa, Kaphaja jwara</i>
60.	Ab.M.31/37	<i>Rohisha</i>	Eladi varga	-
61.	Sh.Ni.2/642	<i>Rohisha truna</i>	Dwithiyabhaga	<i>Hridroga, Kantarogas, Kasa, Shula, Raktapitta, Kapharoga, Jwara</i>
62.	Pr.Ni.4/6	<i>Rohisha</i>	Sharadi varga	<i>Vata-kaphahara, Swasahara, Kasahara, Shulahara</i>

RESEARCH UPDATE

1. *Rohisha* essential oil (E.O) showed Anti-helminthic activity against Indian earthworm *Pheretima Posthuma*.^[23]
2. *Rohisha* essential oil fumigation showed Anti-inflammatory activity on bacterias *Callosobruchus Chensis* & *Tribolium castaneum*.^[24]
3. *Rohisha* E.O showed Anti-oxidant & Anti-genotoxic activity on human lymphocytic cells.^[25]
4. Neuroprotective effect of *Rohisha* E.O has been evaluated against global cerebral ischemia /reperfusion (I/R-Induced oxidative stress).^[27]
5. *Rohisha* E.O showed mosquito repellent action against *Anopheles sunaicus*.^[30]
6. *Rohisha* E.O showed wound healing activity on diabetic wound induced in rats.^[28]
7. *Rohisha* E.O showed Anti-microbial activity against gram positive bacteria *Bacillus cereus*.^[26]
8. *Rohisha* E.O showed Anti-diabetic activity on diabetic induced rats.^[29]
9. *Rohisha* E.O showed Anti-dandruff activity by inhibiting the growth of dandruff associated microbes.^[31]

DISCUSSION

Rohisha is a perennial grass, which is very important medicinal and aromatic plant and is rich in essential oils. It is one of the drug used in different formulations which are used in many diseases. The medicinal qualities of *Rohisha* include *Katu-Tikta ras, Katu vipaka, Ushna virya*. *Rohisha* is *Kapha-vatahara, Pittahara. Kasa, Swasa, Pratishaya, Stanyakshaya, Amavata, Charmaroga, Khalitya, Aruci, Agnimandya, Ajirna, Visuchika, Shula, Krimi, Hrididourbalya, Vatarakta,*

Raktavikaras, Mutraghata, Jwara, Kantarogas, Raktapitta are treated with it.

CONCLUSION

From the Literature review, it is evident that, *Rohisha* is used to treat *Kasa, Swasa, Pratishaya, Stanyakshaya, Amavata, Charmaroga, Khalitya, Aruci, Agnimandya, Ajirna, Visuchika, Shula, Krimi, Hrididourbalya, Vatarakta, Raktavikaras, Mutraghata, Jwara, Kantarogas, Raktapitta*. Essential oils derived from *Palmarosa* have been reported to exhibit exceptionally good antimicrobial, antifungal, anti-inflammatory, antihelminthic, antioxidant and antidiabetic properties. This plant plays an important role in disease prevention and treatment. There is more need of research to determine clinical application of *Rohisha*. This body of literature will be benefit for future research work.

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