

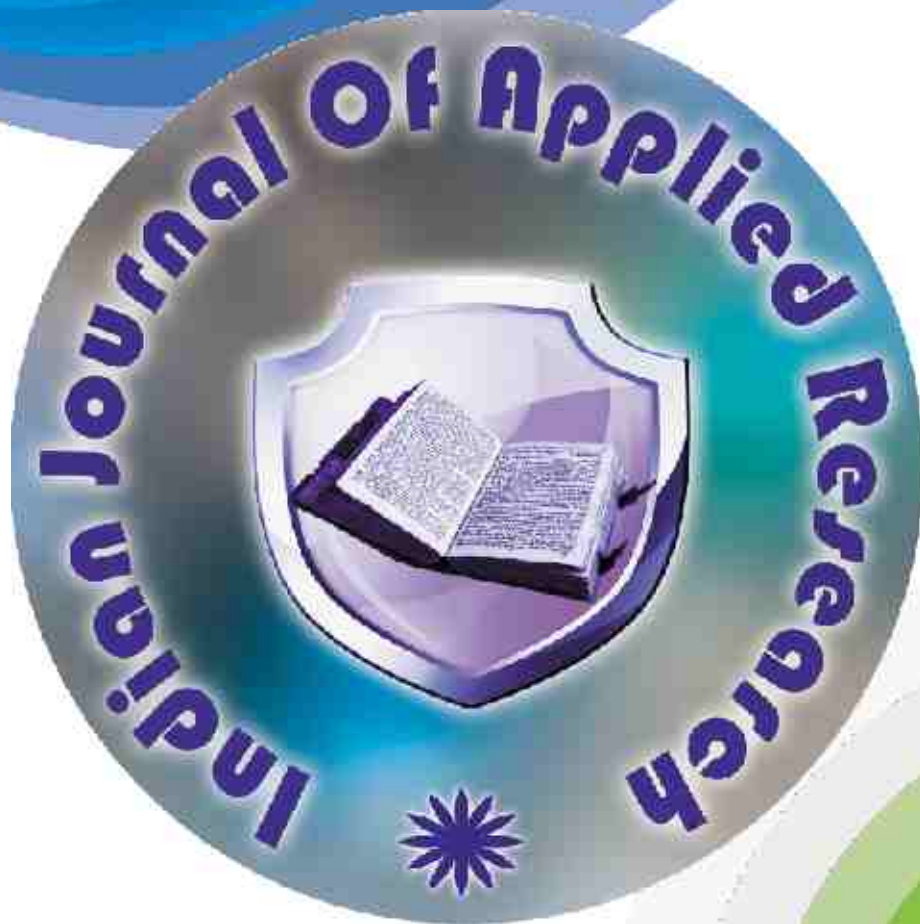
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Index

Sr. No	Title	Author	Subject	Page. No.
1.	Assay Of Triphenylmethane Reductase Enzyme And PCR-Based Identification Of TMR Gene In Enterobacter Asbriae Strain XJUHX-4TM	Tina Mukherjee, Mounita Bhandari, Manas Das	Biotechnology	1-2
2.	An Analysis Of Growth Of Credit Card Industry	Dr. A. Vinayagamoorthy, K. Senthikumar	Commerce	3-5
3.	Impact Of Pre-Merger And Post Merger On Financial Performance (With Reference To Private Sector Banks)	Dr. Shital Vekariya	Commerce	6-8
4.	Relativity On Climate And Competencies In Human Resource Development With Reference To Neyveli Lignite Corporation Ltd,	S. Jayakumar. Dr. R. Ramachandran	Commerce	9-11
5.	Human Resource Outsourcing: A Strategy For Gaining Competitive Advantage	Dr. Santosh M. Singh	Commerce	12-13
6.	Relationship Between EVA And ROI And MVA (A Case Study Of Ten Manufacturing Industries In India)	Dr. Shivani Gupta	Commerce	14-15
7.	Modeling The Traits Of An Effective Teacher At Higher Education	Dr. Haridayal Sharma	Commerce	16-17
8.	Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (Mgnrega): Issues And Challenges	Dr. Mohd. Ashraf Ali, Mushtaq Ahmad	Commerce	18-20
9.	Standardisation And Grading	Viram. J. Vala, Dr. Vijay Kumar Soni	Commerce	21-22
10.	Profitability Of Selected Information Technology Companies In India	Dr. M. Jegadeeshwaran, C. Udaya	Commerce	23-25
11.	Emerging Trends In The Indian Media And Entertainment Industry	Dr Mahalaxmi Krishnan	Commerce	26-27
12.	Inventory Management Strategies And Control Techniques: An Empirical Investigation Of Small Scale Industries	Vipul Chalotra, Neetu Andotra	Commerce	28-30
13.	A Study On Performance Indicators Of Commercial Banks	Dr. G. Ganesan, P. Parthasarathy	Commerce	31-33
14.	Improved Approaches To Coreference Resolution In Machine Learning	Kuldeep Singh Raghuwanshi, Ashwini Kumar Verma	Computer Science	34-37
15.	Security Issues & Controls In Cloud Computing	V. Naga Lakshmi	Computer Science	38-40
16.	Human Development Index Of De-Notified Nomadic Castes In Maharashtra Division: A Study Of Jalna And Aurangabad Districts	Dr. Ashok Pawar	Economics	41-43
17.	Public Private Partnership In Rural & Urban Projects In India	Dr. Ashok S. Pawar, Dr. Shankar B. Ambhore	Economics	44-45
18.	Populace Insight On Development In Public Health Sector Of India Subsequent To Functioning Of National Rural Health Mission	Krishnakant Sharma	Economics	46-49
19.	Problems Of Rural Women Entrepreneurs In India: A Conceptual Overview	C. Jeyasri Usha N Devi, Dr. A. Sankaran	Economics	50-52
20.	Poverty Of Banjara And Vanjari Communities In India	Tidke Atish S., Dr. Pawar Ashok S.	Economics	53-54
21.	India And China: Economic Reforms And WTO	Dr. Surinder Kumar Singla, Dr. Kulwinder Singh	Economics	55- 56
22.	Implementing Life Skill Education Strategies In Teaching – Learning Process	R. Kalaiselvi, Dr. A. Palanisamy, Dr. A R. Saravanakumar	Education	57-59

23.	Utilisation Of Modern Technology By The Teachers In Pupil Processing Organisation	Dr. P.Paul Devanesan, Dr A. Selvan	Education	60-61
24.	Impact Of Vocational Training On Students	K.Sudha Rani, G.Umapathi, Dr. T. Ananda,	Education	62-63
25.	A Study On Emotional Intelligence Of Secondary School Teachers	Dr. Umme Kulsum, Prathima H.P.	Education	64-66
26.	The Efficiency Of Feedback Strategy Of Homework On The Development Of 10th Grade EFL Writing Skill In Al-Karak Educational Directorate	Majid Al- Khataybeh, Areej Al-Shourafa`	noitacudE	67-74
27.	Perspectives Of Stress Management In Education System	M. Meenakshisundaram, G. P. Raja, Dr. A R. Saravanakumar	Education	75-76
28.	Attention Regulation Of Meditators And Non-Meditators Of Class IX	G. Madhavi Kanakadurga, Dr. D. Vasanta Kumari,	Education	77-78
29.	Role Of Psychoeducation In Teaching – Learning Process	Dr. A R. Saravanakumar, Dr. A. Balu, Dr. S. Subbiah	Education	79-80
30.	Microcontroller Driven RGB Led System For Tristimulus Surface Colorimetry	T. N. Ghorude, A. D. Shaligram	Electronics	81-83
31.	Pmgsy And Rural Roads Development In India: Economic, Financial And Maintenance Issues	K.C. Manjunath	Engineering	84-86
32.	Routing Packets On A Chip.	Naren V Tikare	Engineering	87-89
33.	Finding The Nearest Neighbors In Biological Databases	Er. Pankaj Bhambri, Dr. O.P. Gupta, Er. Franky Goyal	Engineering	90-92
34.	Factors Affecting The Sustainability Of The Asphalt Roads: A Case Study Of Irbid Inner Ring Road, Jordan	Eng. Nasr Ahmad Dr. Mihai Iliescu	Engineering	93-94
35.	Physical And Chemical Testing Of Compounded PVC	Sapna Dabade, Dr. Dheeraj Mandloi, Deepak Khare	Engineering	95-96
36.	Impact Of Organic Farming On Yield Of Some Common Crops- A Case Study.	Namrata D. Awandekar	Environmental Science	97
37.	Hydrogeologic Settings Of The North And South Brahmaputra Plains In Upper Assam: A Comparative Study	Dr. Uttam Goswami	Geology	98-100
38.	To Study Staffing Pattern In Rajasthan Public Healthcare Delivery System.	Dr. Ashwin G. Modi, Sushman Sharma	Healthcare	101-105
39.	Work And Health: A Situational Analysis Of Factory Workers	Dr. S. S. Vijayanchali, Dr. E. Arumuga Gandhi	Home Science	106-108
40.	Performance Of Camel Kid Hair: Acrylic Blended Yarn And Knitted Fabric	Suman Pant, Anjali Sharma	Home Science	109-110
41.	Impact Of Holistic Nutrition Education Package On Diabetes Mellitus Control In Middle Aged Women	Dr. Anjali Rajwade	Home Science	111-112
42.	Assessment Of Relationship Between Ida And Personal Hygiene, Nutritional Knowledge And Dietary Practices In Adolescent Girls	Dr. Anjali Rajwade	Home Science	113-114
43.	Employee Attrition And Retention In Private Insurance Sector– A HRM Challenge	Dr. J. Senthil Vel Murugan, S.Bala Murugan	Human Resource Management	115-117
44.	A Study On Impact Of Unionism On Industrial Relations In Manufacturing Sector	Jaya Ahuja	Industrial Relations	118-120

45.	Augmentation Of India's Foreign Exchange Reserve: An Analysis	Dr.S P.Mathiraj, Ar.Annadurai	International Business	121-123
46.	Films – A Techno Literary Art Form	Dr. Dipti Mehta	Literature	124-125
47.	Indirect Models Of Reading To Develop Descriptive Writing	Dr. K. Madhavi	Literature	126-128
48.	Ramkrishna Mishra Ke Upanaso Me Rajnetaik Chetavni	Dr. Sanjay Rathod, Dilip Jhadav	Literature	129
49.	Hindi Kavita Me Nari Jivan Ka Badla Swarup	Dr. Sanjay Rathod	Literature	130
50.	Impact Of IPL Sponsorship On Consumer Buying Behavior With Reference To Nagpur City	Chandrima Das	Management	131-135
51.	Crowd Sourcing –A New Management Mantra	Devi Premnath, Dr. C. Nateson	Management	136-137
52.	Small Scale Industries In India: An Evaluation Of Productivity In The Post-Liberalized Scenario	Dr. Gaurav Lodha,	Management	138-139
53.	Comparative Analysis Of Milk Products With Respect To Its Competitors With Special Reference To Karnataka Milk Federation (KMF) – At Dharwada City, Karnataka, India	Dr. N. Ramanjaneyalu	Management	140-143
54.	A Study On Work Stress In Women Employees In Coimbatore District	R. Maheswari, N. Brindha	Management	144-145
55.	Accounting For Carbon Credits	Dr. Gaurav Lodha	Management	146-148
56.	A Literature Review On The Relationship Between Training (As A Core Responsibility Of HRM) And Firm Performance.	Priya Sharma, Dr. S. L. Gupta	Management	149-152
57.	A Study On Agricultural Marketing Practices And Constraints With Special Reference To Paddy / Rice.	CM Maran, Dr Raja Pranmalai	Management	153-156
58.	Performance Of Share Price Of Indian Public Sector Banks And Private Sector Banks - Comparative Study	V. Prabakaran, D. Lakshmi Prabha	Management	157-158
59.	Intuitionistic Fuzzy Primary And Semiprimary Ideal	Dr. M.Palanivelrajan, S.Nandakumar	Mathematics	159-160
60.	Significance Of Umbilical Artery Velocimetry In Perinatal Outcome Of Fetuses With Intrauterine Growth Retardation.	Dr G S Shekhawat	Medical Science	161-163
61.	Large Adult Sacrococcygeal Teratoma: A Case Report And Review Of Literature.	Dr.Yavalkar Pa, Dr. Naik Am.	Medical Science	164-165
62.	Epidural Steroid In Low Back Ache	Dr. B. L. Khajotia, Dr. Neelam Meena	Medical Science	166-167
63.	A Comparative Study Of Second Trimester MTP With Use Of Vaginal Misoprostol And Extra Amniotic Instillation Of Ethacridine Lactate.	Dr. Ketaki Junnare, Dr. Sameer Darawade, Dr. Priyamvada Shah, Dr. Swati Mali.	Medical Science	168-169
64.	A Novel Surgical Approach For Treatment Of Sui –TVT Obturator Tape	Dr. Ketaki Junnare, Dr. Durga Karne, Dr Neelesh Risbud.	Medical Science	170-171
65.	Advantage Of Fallopian Tube Sperm Perfusion Over Intra-Uterine Insemination When Used In Combination With Ovarian Stimulation For The Treatment Of Unexplained Infertility.	Dr G S Shekhawat, Dr Pushpalata Naphade	Medical Science	172-175

66.	"Bilateral Sertoli-Leydig Cell Tumor In Postmenopausal Female" A Case Report	Dr. Priyamvada Shah, Dr. Ketakijunnare, Dr. DurgaKarne	Medical Science	176-178
67.	Pretreatment With Ephedrine For Prevention Of Pain Associated With Propofol Injection.	Dr. Kavita U Adate, Dr. Jyoti A. Solanki	Medical Science	179-181
68.	Does The Structured Teaching Programme Influence The Knowledge About Physical Wellbeing Of School Children? A Quasi Experimental Study.	Dr. S. Valliammal, Dr. Ramachandra, Raja Sudhakar	Nursing	182-184
69.	An Approach For Information Retrieval For Bookstores Using Formal Ontology	Sumit Jain, C.S.Bhatia	Ontology	185-187
70.	Analgesic Activity Of Anacardium Occidentale	A. Devadoss, C. Aparna, K. Parimala, D. Sukumar	Organic Chemistry	188-190
71.	Behaviourism : Science Or Metaphysics	Dr. Jatinder Kumar Sharma	Philosophy	191-193
72.	Multi-Dimensional Perspectives Of Obesity And Its Management	S. Dhanaraj, Dr. A. Palanisamy	Physical Education	194-196
73.	Refractive Index, Density, Excess Molar Volume, Excess Molar Refraction For Liquid Mixtures (Ethyl Ethanoate + Benzene Derivatives) At Different Temperatures	Sheeraz Akbar, Mahendra Kumar	Physics	197-199
74.	Refractive Indices, Densities And Excess Properties For Liquid Mixtures (Cetane + Alkanols) At Different Temperatures	Sheeraz Akbar, Mahendra Kumar	Physics	200-202
75.	Capacity Building For Effective Local Governance: Indian Perspectives	Dr. Pralhad Chengte	Political Science	203-205
76.	Psychological Well-Being: A Study Of Non-Institutionalized Aged	Dr. Pankaj S. Suvera	Psychology	206-208
77.	Women Empowerment Through N R E G S (With Reference To State Of West Bengal)	Dilip Kumar Karak	Social Sciences	209-211
78.	Effect Of Selected Yogic, Aerobic And Laughter Exercises On Blood Pressure Of High School Boys	Dr.Manjappa.P, Dr.Shivarama Reddy. M	Sports	212-216
79.	Association Study Between Lead And Copper Accumulation At Different Physiological Systems Of Goat By Application Of Canonical Correlation And Canonical Correspondence Analyses	Partha Karmakar, Debasis Mazumdar, Seema Sarkar (Mondal), Sougata Karmakar	Statistics	217-219
80.	Development Of Silver -Silica Nanocomposite For Novel Humidity Sensing Application	Surender Duhan	Technology	220-221



Analgesic activity of *Anacardium occidentale*

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ABSTRACT

The fresh flowers of *Anacardium occidentale* Linn., cashewnut, is examined to contain the flavonoids quercetin and isoquercitrin. Modern physical methods like UV, NMR and chemical reactions, PC and hydrolytic studies were used to ascertain the structure. The analgesic property of the isolated glycoside has been found to contain ample analgesic activity as it is compared with a standard.

Keywords : *Anacardium occidentale*, quercetin, isoquercitrin, albino rats.

Introduction

A *Anacardium occidentale* Linn., Popularly Known as Mundiri Kottai, in Tamil, is a small spreading, ever green tree, sometimes reaching a height of 12 m, native to tropical America, and naturalized in the warmer parts of India especially near the sea¹.

The acrid oil stated above as cardole is often applied to floors or wooden rafters of house to prevent the attack of white ants, and most effectually keeps them away. A transparent gum is obtained from the trunk of the tree, useful as a good varnish, and making a fair substitute for gum-Arabic. It should be collected while sap is rising. It is particularly useful when the depredations of insects require to be guarded against. For this purpose it is used in South America by the bookbinders, who wash their books with a solution of it in order to keep away moths and ants.²

Experimental

Extraction and Fractionation

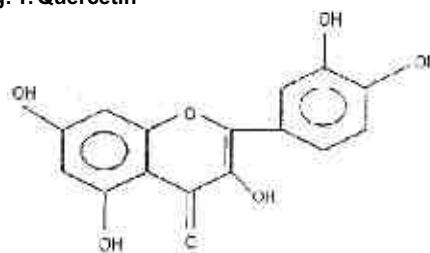
Fresh flowers (1 kg) of *A. occidentale* collected from in and around Jayankondam, Perambalur District, during May-June were extracted with 85% methanol (5 X 500 ml) under reflux. The alcoholic extract was concentrated in vacuo and the aqueous concentrate was successively fractionated with petroleum ether (60-80C) (4 X 250 ml) peroxide - free Et₂O (3 X 250 ml) and EtOAc (4 X 250). The petrol fraction did not yield any crystalline solid and could not be studied further.

Et₂O Fraction (flavonol: quercetin)

The Et₂O fraction was concentrated in vacuo and left in and ice-chest for a week. A yellow solid that separated was filtered and studied. On crystallization from MeOH, pale yellow needles were obtained [G], m.p. 313-15C, yield 0.028]. It was readily soluble in organic solvents and sparingly in hot water. It gave a red color with Mg-HCl, Olive- green color with alc. Fe³⁺, golden-yellow color with NH₃ and NaOH, yellow solution with a pale green fluorescence with conc. H₂SO₄ and appeared yellow under UV and UV/NH₃. It reduced ammonical AgNO₃ in the cold and Fehling's solution on heating. It answered the Horhammer-Hansel³, Wilson's boric acid⁴ and Gibb's⁵ tests. It gave a pentaacetate, m.p. 200-01C and a pentabenzoate m.p 188-90C. It had ^{MeOH} 255, 269 sh, 370: NaOMe 262 sh, 322, 420 (dec.) + AlCl₃ 267, 303, 458; +

(AlCl₃ - HCl) 267,303,351, 428; + NaOAc 275,328,390

Fig: 1. Quercetin

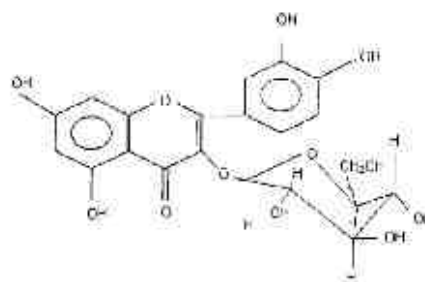


and + (NaOAc-H₃BO₃) 262,303 sh, 386 nm and had R_f values as depicted in Table I-1. The ¹H-NMR of the flavonol is appended. It was identified as quercetin and the identity as confirmed by CO- mixed-PC and m.m.p with an authentic sample of quercetin from *Physalis minima*⁶.

Ethyl acetate fraction: (flavonol glycoside-isoquercitrin)

The EtOAc fraction was concentrated in vacuo and left in an ice-chest for 2 days. A yellow solid that separated was filtered and studied. It was recrystallised from MeOH when it afforded yellow crystals, m.p 229-30C (yield 0.1%). It was freely soluble in EtOAc and MeOH and sparingly in water. It gave an olive- green colour with alc. FeCl₃ deep pink colour with Mg - HCl, yellow colour with NaOH and appeared deep purple under UV that turned yellow on exposure to NH₃. It did not answer the Horhammer-Hansel test but responded to the Wilson's boric acid. Gibb's and Molich's tests. The pigment was

Fig: 2. Isoquercitrin



homogeneous on TLC and had R_f as indicated in Table I-2 and had $\lambda_{\text{max}}^{\text{MeOH}}$ nm 257, 269 sh, 299 sh, 362; + NaOMe, 272, 327, 409; + AlCl₃ 275, 303 sh; 333, 430; + (AlCl₃ HCl) 274, 303 sh, 353, 401; + NaOAc 271, 320 sh, 372, and, + (NaOAc-H₃BO₃) 265, 300 sh, 372. The ¹H- and ¹³C-NMR of the glycoside are appended (Figs). It was identified as isoquercitrin by comparing it with an authentic sample isolated from *G. ulmifolia*.

Table-I : R_f (X 100) Values Of The Constituents Of The Flowers Of Anacardium Occidentale (Whatman No.1, Ascending, 30 ± 2C)

Compound	Developing solvents									
	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i	j
Glycoside From <i>A. occidentale</i>	3	7	22	34	59	60	57	6	67	68
Isoquercitrin (authentic)	3	6	23	35	60	59	55	66	66	68
Aglycone of The above glycoside	-	-	4	18	41	84	47	48	71	87

TABLE II : R_f (X 100) values of the sugar from the glycoside from *a. occidentale*

Compound	Developing solvents			
	e	f	g	i
Sugar from the Hydrolysate of EtOAc fraction	77	09	39	90
Glucose (authentic)	77	09	39	90

Hydrolysis of the glycoside

To a solution of the glycoside (0.1g, 0.2 m mole) in hot aq. methanol (10ml, 50 %) an equal volume of H₂SO₄ (10%) was added and the mixture refluxed at 100C for 2hr. The aq. Hydrolysate was worked up in the usual way as mentioned under *A. occidentale*.

Identification of aglycone (flavonol: quercetin)

The yellow pigment from the above hydrolysate was identified as quercetin as described under Et₂O fraction.

Identification of Sugar (glucose)

The aq. solution from the above hydrolysate was neutralised with BaCO₃ and filtered. The concentrated filtrate on chromatographic examination (PC) gave R_f values corresponding to those of glucose. The running properties of the glycoside were in favour of a monoside. The identity of the sugar was also confirmed by direct comparison with an authentic sample of glucose.

Table-III : ¹³C-NMR And Signal Assignment For The Aglycone From The Flowers Of Anacardium Occidentale

Compound	C-2	C-3	C-4	C-5	C-6	C-7	C-8	C-9	C-10
Quercetin (from literature) (δ ppm)	146.9	135.8	175.9	160.8	98.3	164.0	93.5	156.2	103.1
Aglycone Isolated	146.838	135.709	175.840	160.727	98.295	164.426	93.427	156.211	102.990

Compound	C-1'	C-2'	C-3'	C-4'	C-5'	C-6'
Quercetin (from literature) 254 (δ ppm)	122.1	115.2	145.1	147.1	115.7	120.1
Aglycone Isolated	122.035	115.154	145.110	147.755	115.683	120.026

Table-IV : ¹³C-NMR And Signal Assignment For The Glycoside From The Flowers Of Anacardium Occidentale

Compound	C-2	C-3	C-4	C-5	C-6	C-7	C-8	C-9	C-10
Glycoside Isolated	156.421	135.516	177.645	161.417	98.873	164.288	93.728	156.421	104.187

Compound	C-1	C-2	C-3	C-4	C-5	C-6
Glycoside	121.384	115.423	144.976	148.631	116.212	121.801
Compound	C-1"	C-2"	C-3"	C-4"	C-5"	C-6"
Glycoside	101.078	74.288	76.112	69.747	77.316	60.797

Results And Discussion

The flowers of *A. occidentale* have been found to contain quercetin and its isoquercitrin. The UV spectrum of the flavonol aglycone obtained from the ether fraction $\lambda_{\text{max}}^{\text{MeOH}}$ at

370 nm (band I) and 255 nm (band II) indicating a flavonol skeleton. Its NaOMe spectrum degenerated with time. Flavonols Possessing free-OH groups at the 3-3' and 4' positions are known to be unstable in NaOMe. It could therefore be inferred that there are free-OH groups at C-3, C-3' and C-4' in the compound. A shift of + 58nm on the addition of AlCl₃ - HCl is indicative of the presence of a free OH at C-5 in the A-ring.

A comparison of AlCl₃ and AlCl₃ HCl spectra revealed an additional bathochromic shift of 30nm in the case of AlCl₃ spectrum (without acid), which again points to the presence of catechol type of B-ring. The presence of a free-OH at C-7 is evident from the bathochromic shift of 20nm, in band II on the addition of NaOAc. The presence of a catechol type of B-ring is also evident from the bathochromic shift of 16nm noticed in band I on addition of H₃BO₃.

In the ¹H-NMR-7 spectrum (400 MHz, DMSO-d₆, TMS) Fig-2 of the aglycone the hydroxyl proton at C-5 shows up at 12.4799 ppm as a distinct singlet.

The Signal of 9.469 ppm corresponds to - OH proton C-3. The doublet at 8.04 and 8.02 ppm accounts for the hydroxyl protons at C-3' and C-4' the C-5' protons appears as a doublet at 6.91 ppm (j=8.5 HZ). The Signals due to the protons at C-2 and C-6 overlap at 7.53 ppm ring protons at C-6 and C-8 could be located respectively at 6.17 and 6.40 ppm. Based on this observation the aglycone has been unambiguously characterized as quercetin.

The fresh flowers of *A. occidentale* have been found to contain quercetin and isoquercitrin.

The UV Spectrum of the aglycone exhibited 2 major peaks at 370 nm (band I) and 255 nm (band II) to reveal a flavonol skeleton. Decomposition was observed on the addition NaOMe to the aglycone. Since flavonols which have free hydroxyl groups at the 3,3' and 4' positions are unstable in NaOMe and the absorption peaks in NaOMe spectrum degenerate in a few minutes, it was inferred that there was free-OH group at C-3, C-3' and C-4' in the compound. A shift of + 58 nm on the addition of AlCl₃ - HCl showed the presence of a free 5-OH in the A-ring.

Comparing the AlCl₃ spectra, + 30 nm shift was observed in the case of AlCl₃ without acid, which also revealed a B-ring O-dihydroxyl group. The presence of a free-OH at C-7 was ascertained by a shift of + 19 nm (band II) on the addition of NaOAc. The catechol type of dihydroxyl group in B-ring was further evidenced by the bathochromic shift 18 nm on the addition of H₃BO₃.

The UV spectrum of the glycoside showed two major absorption peaks at 362 nm (band I) and 257nm (band II) showing a flavonol skeleton. A bathochromic shift of 47 nm in band I observed in its NaOMe spectrum indicated the presence of a free 4'OH group. The AlCl₃-HCl spectra of the glycoside as well as its aglycone showed 3 absorption peaks and a shoulder indicating a free 5-OH group in both. The glycoside as well as its aglycone did not exhibit any intense UV fluorescence ascertaining the presence of a free hydroxyl in AlCl₃ - HCl spectra was yet another evidence for the same.

The presence of a C-7-OH group is evident from a shift of +14 nm in the case of the glycoside and +19 nm in the case of the aglycone on addition of NaOAc. The presence of an O-dihydroxyl Group in the B-ring could be inferred from a shift of +10 nm noticed in the glycoside and +18 nm noticed in case of the aglycone on the addition of H₃BO₃. In the AlCl₃ spectrum, an absorption peak was noticed at 430 nm (band I) which on addition of HCl reduced by 29 nm. This another evidence for the presence of a catechol type di-OH group in the B-ring.

In the ¹H-NMR spectrum (290 MHz, DMSO-d₆, TMS) of the glycoside, the protons at C-6 and C-9 appear, as doublets at 6.2 and 6.4 ppm respectively. The 5-OH proton resonates at 12.7 ppm as a distinct singlet. The C-5' proton appear as a doublet at 6.8 ppm. The H-1" signal of the flavonol 3-O-glycoside is found at 5.9 ppm. The remaining glycosyl Protons appear in the range 3.4 to 3.5 ppm.

Supporting evidence for the structure of the glycoside was provided by the analysis of $^{13}\text{C-NMR}$ (67.89 MHz, DMSO-d_6 , TMS) data a complete assignment is given (Table). Due to glycosylation at 3-position, C-2 and C-4 carbons absorb at 101 ppm. The rest of the carbons of the sugar unit appear between 77.3 and 60.9 ppm.

Based on this the glycoside has been characterized as isoquercitrin (quercetin 3-O-glycoside).

Analgesic activity examination

Methods and materials

The Glassman's method was employed for the assessment of analgesic activity. Albino Swiss were divided into groups of six animals each (20-25 grams). They were fasted initially for 16 hours. Group 1 served as control (Normal saline 2 ml / Kg). Group 2 & 3 were administered ethyl acetate extract of *Anacardium occidentale* (100 mg / Kg & 200 mg / kg) by oral route respectively. Group 4 served as standard (Pentazocine 5 mg / kg) by intraperitoneal route. The time of reaction to pain stimulus of the mice placed on the hot plate heated at $55 \pm 0.5^\circ \text{C}$ was recorded at 30 min., 60 min., 120 and 180 min., after administration of test drug. The increase in reaction time against control was calculated.

Fig : 3 : Drug Administration



Fig : 4 : Mouse Kept at 55.5°C



Fig 5 : Tolerance Limit Observation



TABLE-5 : Analgesic Effect Of *Anacardium Occidentale* By Hot Plate Method

Treatment	Reaction time in sec.				
	0	30	60	120	180
Control	4.4± 0.93	4.6± 0.82	4.9± 0.83	4.1± 0.52	4.4± 0.38
<i>Anacardium occidentale</i> (100 mg / kg)	4.2± 0.71	4.9± 0.35	5.7± 0.24	6.3± 0.15	6.5± 0.37
<i>Anacardium occidentale</i> (200 mg / kg)	4.4± 0.37	6.3± 0.35	8.6± 0.36	9.6± 0.47*	10.0± 0.31*
Pentazocine (5mg / kg)	4.3± 0.46	6.8± 0.87	8.4± 0.67	10.0± 0.43*	10.0± 0.46*

Data are expressed mean \pm S.E, n = 6

*P < 0.01 vs Control by students 't' test

Results And Discussion

The yellow pigment isolated from the flowers of *A. occidentale* was examined for its analgesic property by Hot plate Method.

At a lower concentration of 100 mg/Kg body weight of the mice, two different concentrations were applied. The reaction time was observed at 0, 30th, 60th, 120th and 180th minute. A control without drug showed approximately 4.9 seconds. While 100 mg/kg body weight was administered the reaction time increases with the above mentioned intervals. It goes to the maximum level of 6.5 \pm 0.37 seconds. As the concentration of the drug is increased to 200 mg / kg body weight substantial analgesic property is noticed. The value gets elevated from 4.4 \pm 0.37 at the starting reaches 10.0 \pm 0.31 at 180th minute. Thus the drug shows the maximum analgesic property while it is compared with a standard drug of pentazocine of 5 mg/kg body weight.

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