Int J Pharm Bio Sci 2017 Apr; 8(2): (P) 283-291

Original Research Article Pharmacognosy

International Journal of Pharma and Bio Sciences

ISSN
0975-6299

# RELATIVE TOTAL PHENOLICS CONTENT, 1,1-DIPHENYL PICRYLHYDRAZYL FREE RADICAL SCAVENGING AND TOTAL ANTIOXIDANT POTENTIALS OF SEVEN INDIAN MEDICINAL PLANT PARTS' AQUEOUS EXTRACTS

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## ABSTRACT

Here, relative total phenolics, 1,1-diphenyl-2-picrylhydrazyl (DPPH) free radical scavenging, total antioxidant potentials and phytochemical profiles of seven ethnomedicinally important, mostly antitumor, plant parts' aqueous extracts (leaves of: *Cordia dichotoma*, *Holoptelea integrifolia, Crinum asiaticum*; aerial parts of: *Croton bonplandianum*, *Cayratia carnosa*, *Scadoxus multiflorus* and seeds of: *Trigonella foenum-graecum*) were analyzed. Data indicate the different extracts with varied amounts of phenolics and their differential capacity to neutralize the DPPH free radicals and total antioxidant activity. Out of the seven extracts, the maximum free radical scavenging, total antioxidant activity and the highest phenolics content was found in *C. asiaticum.* The preliminary phytochemical analysis indicates the prevalent secondary metabolites are alkaloids, terpenoids, tannins and saponins. In summary, considering the relative phenolics abundance and antioxidant activities, it can be concluded that out of seven anticancer plant products tested here *C. asiaticum* leaf aqueous extract possesses the highest efficient free radical scavengers and antioxidant potentials. Therefore, further study demands for *in vivo* antioxidant and cyto-genotoxic potentials of *C. asiaticum.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Antioxidant, Phenolics, DPPH, Crinum asiaticum, Trigonella foenum-graecum, Scadoxus multiflorus*

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**Received on : 31-01-2017**
**Revised and Accepted on 15-04-2017**
**DOI: http://dx.doi.org/10.22376/ijpbs.2017.8.2.p283-291**

# INTRODUCTION

Cancer, rheumatism, AIDS, atherosclerosis, cataracts, hyperglycemia, other auto-immune and old age diseases are associated with oxidative stress.[1] There are diverse groups of antioxidants who scavenge the free radicals by reduction, like tocopherol (vitamin E) and ascorbic acid (vitamin C), polyphenols, thiols, glutathione (a tri-peptide), enzymes (catalase, peroxidase and superoxide dismutase) who prevent proteins, lipids and deoxyribonucleic acids from oxidative damages.[2,3,4] Antioxidants by scavenging reactive oxygen species (ROS) and inhibiting free radicals protect the cellular oxidisable components.[5] Antioxidants are extensively used in foodstuff industries due to their numerous health benefits and are considered as nutraceutical components. Recently the demand of natural antioxidants has increased as they cause lesser liver damage, can prevent carcinogenesis and other pathological conditions due to its protective biochemical functions.[6] The potential sources of natural antioxidants are fruits, seeds, vegetables, leaves, roots, barks, spices and herbs.[7] Plant's major aromatic secondary metabolites, such as phenolics, are accountable for the nutritional, colour and sensory qualities of foods.[8,9] Herbal foods are rich in antioxidant due to their richness in phenolic content and are responsible for their varied medicinal activities like antiviral, antiallergic, antiinflammatory, antimicrobial, anticarcinogenic. Moreover, by their free radical scavenging activities, they can reduce oxidative alteration of LDLs (low density lipoproteins) and lipid peroxidation[10] and thus perform crucial role in our health care.[11,12,13,14,15,16] Positive correlation exists between phenolic content and antioxidant activity like as found in clove, oregano, garden thyme, peppermint, sage, cinnamon and all spices.[17] Flavonoids, the most abundant phenolics are secondary metabolites, derived from malonate, phenylalanine and tyrosine and the well established bioactive flavonoids are flavones, flavanones, isoflavones, flavanonols, flavans, flavanols, flavonols, anthocyanidins and catechins.[18] These are abundant in fruits, vegetables, roots, stems, barks, flowers, tea, grains and wine.[19] The Primary antioxidant function of flavonoids due to having their hydroxyl groups that leads to antiallergic, antiatherosclerotic, antiinflammatory, anticancer, cardio protective[20] and detoxification activities.[21] The search for secondary metabolites having antioxidant potentials continues to be of a great significance in the search for remedies against free radical-mediated diseases.[22,23] Therefore, the keen interest on the antioxidant research is principally due to the fact that the majority of pathological conditions are coupled with the ROS and oxidative stress. In this context, here, we aimed to explore relative free radical (DPPH) scavenging and antioxidant potentials of seven ethnomedicinally important (mostly antitumor) plant products' (leaves of: *Cordia dichotoma*, *Holoptelea integrifolia, Crinum asiaticum*; aerial parts of: *Croton bonplandianum*, *Cayratia crcarnosa*, *Scadoxus multiflorus* and seeds of: *Trigonella foenum-graecum*) aqueous extracts and to correlate with the total phenol and flavonoid contents. *Cordia dichotoma* (family: Boraginaceae) leaves are traditionally used as antidiabetic, antihelmintic, astringent, diuretic, demulcent, expectorant, purgative, tonic, antiulcer and to treat cough.[24,25,26,27,28] In vitro growth inhibition in human cervical cancer cell line (HeLa) and apoptosis induction indicate its anticancer activity.[29] Ethnomedicinally, the leaves of *Holoptelea integrifolia* (family: Ulmaceae) are used for cancer treatment[30] and also used for treating odema, inflammation, jaundice, herpes infection, leprosy and other skin diseases, hair loss, intestinal disorders and piles.[31,32,33,34,35] *Crinum asiaticum* Linn. (family: Amaryllidaceae) is a tuberous herb used to treat fevers, lumbago, headaches, earaches, swellings, aches, sores, piles, haemorrhoids, chaps as a rheumatic remedy to relieve local pain,[36] inflamed joints, injury and fractures,[37] common cold and cough, vomiting, worm infestations, disuria, polyuria, bowel complains, throat disorder, colic, flatulence and even leprosy.[38,39,40] Moreover, cytotoxicity against human tumor cell lines and *in vivo* antitumor activity of it has been reported.[41,42] *Croton bonplandianum* (family: Euphorbiaceae) is one of the most common exotic weeds in wastelands with high medicinal value and is commonly used to control high blood pressure and for the treatment of cholera, liver and skin diseases including cut and wounds. It is also used as antiseptic and antidote.[43,44,45] It has been experimentally proved to be useful in cancer therapy.[46] The aerial parts of *Cayratia carnosa* (family: Vitaceae) are used as diuretic, anticancer, antiviral, antibacterial, antiprotozoal, hypoglycemic, astringent, splenopathy and leucorrhea.[47,48,49] Leaves, roots and seeds are used as blood purifiers and poultice to ulcers, wounds and boils.[48,50,51] *Scadoxus multiflorus* (family: Amaryllidaceae), the poisonous fireball lily, is used to treat any respiratory problems, such as asthma, bronchitis, pneumonia, sinusitis or tuberculosis and also to treat dropsy, scabies and poorly healing wounds. Antimicrobial properties are the reasons to be beneficial in the treatment of several pathogenic afflictions.[52,53] *Trigonella foenum-graecum* (family: Fabaceae) is found to be beneficial against metabolic diseases (diabetes, obesity, hypercholesterolemia, dyslipidemia), inflammation and cancer. It also has antiulcerogenic, antipyretic and immunomodulatory effects.[54] Researchers reported that it has potential to prevent colon cancer[55] and inhibit growth of breast, pancreatic and prostate cancer cell lines.[56] Though several aspects of medicinal properties of the selected seven antitumor plant products are explored but information is limited regarding their relative abundance of phenolics, DPPH free radical scavenging and antioxidant potentials. Therefore, in the present study relative abundance of phenolics and their *in vitro* antioxidant potentials are analysed.

# MATERIALS AND METHODS

### *Chemicals*

Tannic acid powder was obtained from Himedia Laboratories Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai, India. Quercetin was purchased from Sigma-Aldrich, St Louis, MO, USA. Ammonium molybdate and sulphuric acid were obtained from Qualigens. Aluminium chloride and sodium phosphate were obtained from Merck Specialities Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai, India. Folin-Ciocalteu and sodium citrate were obtained from BDH Chemicals Ltd., Poole Dorset,

UK. Benzene and ethyl acetate were obtained from SRL, Pvt. Ltd., Mumbai, India. All chemicals used in this study were of analytical grade.

***Collection of plants and storage***

Fresh leaves of *C. dichotoma*, *H. integrifolia, C. asiaticum*; aerial parts of *C. bonplandianum*, *C. carnosa* and *S. multiflorus* were collected from The University of Burdwan campus in September-October of 2013, washed in tap water, shade dried, grinded into small pieces and pulverized using an electric grinder (Philips Mixer Grinder HL1605, Kolkata, West Bengal, India). Only the seeds of *T. foenum-graecum* were collected from local grocery shop and used intact. The plant species were taxonomically identified by Dr. Ambarish Mukherjee (Taxonomist), Professor, Department of Botany, University of Burdwan. Grinded leaf powder was then stocked in an air tight glass container for future use.

***Extract preparation***

50 g plant material (dried powder or seeds) was extracted twice in 500 X 2 ml distilled water for 12 X 2 h at 60°C, in a water bath; extracts were filtered through Whatman filter paper #1 (GE Healthcare UK Limited, Buckinghamshire, UK). The filtrate was concentrated in a vacuum hot air oven at 50°C for around 6 h, the obtained final volume was recorded,[57] and the extracts were stored in -20°C for future use. To determine the extract value and the initial extract concentration, 25ml (5 ml X 5) of extract was evaporated to complete dryness in a hot (60°C) air oven. Leaves extracts of *C. dichotoma*, *H. integrifolia, C. Asiaticum;* aerial part's extracts of *C. bonplandianum*, *C. carnosa*, *S. multiflorus* and seeds extract of *T. foenum-graecum* were abbreviated respectively as *Cd*LAE, *Hi*LAE, *Ca*LAE, *Cb*AAE, *Cc*AAE, *Sm*AAE and *Tf*SAE.

***DPPH free radical scavenging assay***

The relative free radical scavenging capacities of the aqueous extracts of seven different plant products were determined by 1,1-diphenyl-2-picrylhydrazyl, the DPPH, free radical scavenging assay.[58,59,60] DPPH becomes colourless when it accepts hydrogen radical or an electron. Methanolic stock solution of DPPH (0.002%) was freshly prepared. Ascorbic acid was used as standard antioxidant. 1 ml ascorbic acid (5-50 µg/ml) and all the aqueous extracts (50-500 µg/ml) of different concentrations were taken in the respective test tubes. Then in each test tube 3 ml methanol followed by 0.5 ml 1 mM DPPH solution was added. The test tubes were then incubated in darkness for 35 min at room temperature (25 ± 2°C) and the optical density was measured at 517 nm using spectrophotometer (UV-1800 Series, Shimadzu, Japan). Percentage of free radical scavenging activity was calculated as described below-

Scavenging activity (%) = [($Absorbance_{Control}$ - $Absorbance_{Sample}$) / $Absorbance_{Control}$] X 100

***Total antioxidant assay***

Total antioxidant potentials of the different extract fractions were measured by their ability to reduce Mo (VI) to Mo (V) and the ultimate formation of green Mo complex at acidic pH, which gives the highest absorbance at 695 nm. 0.3 ml of sample (100 µg/ml) was taken in each test tube and then 3 ml of reagent solution (0.6 M sulphuric acid, 28 mM sodium phosphates and 4 mM ammonium molybdate) was added. For 90 minutes the reaction mixtures were incubated at 95°C. The absorbance of the solutions was recorded at 695 nm at room temperature using spectrophotometer. Total antioxidant potentials of the extracts were presented in terms of ascorbic acid (standard reducing agent) equivalent in mg/g dry aquous extract.[61]

***Phyto chemical detection***

All the seven extracts were qualitatively tested to detect tannins, triterpenoids, flavonoids, phlobatannins, anthraquinones, alkaloids, saponins, steroids, glycosides and carbohydrates following the standard procedures[62,63,64,65] as described earlier in details.[66]

***Estimation of total phenol and flavonoid contents***

In all the extracts the total phenolic content, as tannic acid equivalent, was estimated following the procedure of Makkar et al[67], with slight modification. Firstly, stock extract solutions were prepared as 1 mg/ml. From this stock 10 µl (=10 µg) was taken in each test tubes and volume was adjusted to 1ml with distilled water. Then, 0.5 ml 1 N Folin-Ciocalteu reagent was added to each tube and immediately mixed thoroughly after adding 2.5 ml 20 % sodium carbonate solution. Next to it, they were kept in dark at room temperature (25 ± 2 ºC) for 40 minutes. At the end OD was recorded at 725 nm using UV-Vis spectrophotometer and phenolic contents were determined comparing with the standard curve. The standard curve of OD was drawn by freshly prepared tannic acid solutions of different concentrations, ranging from 5-50 µg/ml. The total flavonoids content of all the seven extracts were estimated following the aluminium chloride colorimetric method described by Chang et al[68] with slight modification.[69,70] In a test tube 1 ml extract (1 mg/ml) was added to 2 ml of distilled water. 3 ml of 5 % (w/v) sodium nitrite and 0.3 ml of 10 % (w/v) aluminium chloride were mixed to the diluted sample. Just after 6 min 2 ml 1 M sodium hydroxide was added and the final volume was adjusted to 10 ml by adding required amount of distilled water. The OD of the reaction mixtures were measured at 510 nm using the spectrophotometer. The total flavonoid content of the extracts were calculated from the standard OD curve, which was drawn by freshly prepared standard quercetin solutions of different concentrations, ranging from 5-150 µg/ml.

***The correlation analysis***

The correlation of coefficient(r) and coefficient of determination ($r^2$) were determined for the different extracts' extract values i.e. extract yield percentages versus their total phenolics and total flavonoids contents; total phenolics contents versus DPPH free radical scavenging $EC_{50}$ values, total antioxidants and total flavonoids; and total flavonoids content versus DPPH scavenging $EC_{50}$ values and total antioxidants. Correlation between total antioxidants and DPPH free radical scavenging $EC_{50}$ values were also analysed using Microsoft Office Excel (2007) software.

# RESULTS

### *DPPH free radical scavenging assay*

Data indicate extracts of the different medicinal plant parts shows the differential capacity to neutralize the DPPH free radicals and the variation in the $EC_{50}$ values (Table 1). Here, the maximum free radical scavenging activity was shown by *Ca*LAE. It neutralizes half of the free radicals at a concentration of 196.92±11.97 µg/ml which is approximately 8 times more than ascorbic acid (fig. 1). DPPH free radical scavenging $EC_{50}$ values for the other six extracts were determined respectively as 354.52, 355.19, 408.87, 499.85, 533.54 and 579.08 µg/ml for *Sm*AAE, *Tf*SAE, *Hi*LAE, *Cd*LAE, *Cc*AAE, *Cb*AAE (table 1).

### *Total antioxidant capacity*

Alike DPPH scavenging action the used extracts have shown the differential ability to reduce Mo (VI) to Mo (V) and the ultimate formation of green Mo complex at acidic pH. The maximum total antioxidant activity, 213.78±4.96 mg ascorbic acid equivalent per gram dry leaf aqueous extract, was shown by *Ca*LAE and in the other extracts, *Sm*AAE, *Tf*SAE, *Hi*LAE, *Cd*LAE, *Cc*AAE, *Cb*AAE, the total antioxidant activities were recorded respectively in the decreasing order as 171.11±4.92, 159.89±5.63, 155.78±4.14, 121.11±7.2, 74.56±3.49 and 65.67±1.67 mg ascorbic acid equivalent in each gram of dried aqueous extract (table 1).

**Table 1**

***DPPH free radical scavenging $EC_{50}$ and total antioxidant activities of the seven different plant extracts***

| Extracts | DPPH scavenging $EC_{50}$ (µg/ml) values | Total antioxidant activity (Ascorbic Acid equivalent mg/g dried aqueous extract) | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Ascorbic acid | 25.04±1.4 | Range | Average ± SEM |
| *Cb*AAE | 579.1±12.8 | 64.00-69.00 | 65.67±1.67 |
| *Cc*AAE | 533.5±12.1 | 69.00-81.00 | 74.56±3.49 |
| *Cd*LAE | 499.9±24.1 | 107.33-131.67 | 121.11±7.2 |
| *Hi*LAE | 408.9±20.9 | 148.67-163.00 | 155.78±4.14 |
| *Tf*SAE | 355.2±30.7 | 151.00-170.33 | 159.89±5.63 |
| *Sm*AAE | 354.5±30.2 | 163.00-180.00 | 171.11±4.92 |
| *Ca*LAE | 196.9±11.9 | 206.67-223.33 | 213.78±4.96 |

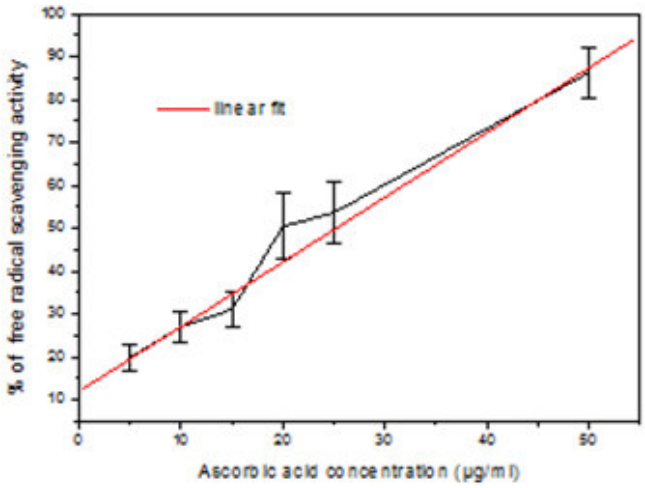


**Figure 1**

***Standard graph, showing percentage of DPPH free radical scavenging activity of ascorbic acid***

### *Phytochemical detection*

The preliminary phytochemical analyses indicate the presence of relatively higher quantities of alkaloids, flavonoids, terpenoids, tannins, saponins, glycosides and carbohydrates in *Ca*LAE, the most effective extract and alkaloids, steroids, tannins, saponins were absent in *Sm*AAE, the second highest effective extract. Terpenoids were present in all the test extracts, where as anthraquinones present only in *Hi*LAE, the fourth effective extract. Test for phlobatannin in all the samples results negative. Glycosides were absent only in *Cb*AAE and carbohydrates were not detected in *Hi*LAE and *Tf*SAE (Table- 2).

**Table 2**
***Phytochemical profiling of the seven plant parts' aqueous extracts***

| PHYTOCHEMICALS (Tests performed) | | *Cb*AAE | *Cc*AAE | *Cd*LAE | *Hi*LAE | *Tf*SAE | *Sm*AAE | *Ca*LAE |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Alkaloids | Mayer's test | + | + | + | + | + | – | + |
| | Wagner's test | – | – | – | – | + | – | + |
| Flavonoids (Alkaline reagent test) | | – | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Anthraquinones (Borntrager's test) | | – | – | – | + | – | – | – |
| Terpenoids[74] | | + | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Steroids[74] | | + | + | + | + | – | – | – |
| Tannins | $FeCl_3$ test | + | + | + | + | + | – | + |
| | Alkaline reagent test | + | + | + | – | + | – | – |
| Phlobatannins (HCl test) | | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Saponins (Froth test) | | + | – | + | + | + | – | + |
| Glycosides (Alkaline reagent test) | | – | + | + | + | + | + | + |
| Carbohydrates | Benedict's test | + | + | + | – | – | + | + |
| | Fehling's test | + | – | + | – | – | + | + |

***'+' indicate presence and '-' indicate absence of the respective phytochemicals***

### *Phytochemical estimation*

### *Total phenol and flavonoid contents*

*Ca*LAE contains 294±6.9 mg tannic acid equivalent phenolics per gram of dried aqueous extract which is significantly more than that of the *Sm*AAE (235±6.9 mg). *Cb*AAE and *Cc*AAE contained least phenolics as 85.33±17.2 mg and 101±8 mg, while *Hi*LAE (176±13.9 mg), *Cd*LAE (192±8 mg) and *Tf*SAE (207.67±10.3 mg) contain moderate amounts of tannic acid equivalent per gram of dried aqueous extract (Table 3). Flavonoid content (Quercetin equivalence) was 53.54 % of total phenolics in *Tf*SAE, 50.68 % in *Ca*LAE and 46.34 % in *Cd*LAE. In *Sm*AAE and *Hi*LAE it was respectively 28.77 and 22.99 %, but in *Cb*AAE and *Cc*AAE it was below 15 % (Table 3).

### *Correlation analysis*

Data indicate a linear negative correlation between DPPH free radical scavenging $EC_{50}$ values and the total phenolic contents (fig. 2), a linear positive correlation exists between total antioxidant activities and total phenolic contents (fig. 3), a positive correlation between phenolics and flavonoids, and negative correlation between total antioxidant and DPPH free radical scavenging $EC_{50}$ values (Table 4

**Table 3**
***Showing pooled data of extract value, total phenolic and flavonoid contents in the extracts***

| Extracts | Extract Yield (%) | Total phenolic content* (mg/g of dae) | Total flavonoid content** (mg/g of dae) |
|---|---|---|---|
| *Cb*AAE | 21.9 | 085.3±17.2 | 10.1±03.6 |
| *Cc*AAE | 17.8 | 101.0±08.0 | 14.2±02.9 |
| *Cd*LAE | 09.6 | 192.0±08.0 | 88.9±12.1 |
| *Hi*LAE | 22.7 | 176.0±13.9 | 40.5±04.6 |
| *Tf*SAE | 29.4 | 207.7±10.3 | 111.2±09.3 |
| *Sm*AAE | 43.6 | 235.0±06.9 | 067.6±02.9 |
| *Ca*LAE | 35.5 | 294.0±06.9 | 148.9±12.4 |

***Tannic Acid equivalent, ** Quercetin equivalent, dae = dried aqueous extract.***

**Table 4**
***Showing results of correlation (r) and coefficient of correlation ($r^2$) analysis amongst different variable factors***

| | Correlation Between | The correlation of coefficient (r) | Coefficient of determination ($r^2$) | Regression equation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | DPPH scavenging $EC_{50}$ value (µg/ml) Vs Total phenolics (mg/g of dae) in different extracts | -0.937 | 0.878 | y = -1.680x + 728.2 |
| 2 | DPPH scavenging $EC_{50}$ value (µg/ml) Vs Total flavonoids (mg/g of dae) in different extracts | -0.846 | 0.715 | y = -2.155x + 566.5 |
| 3 | Total antioxidant in mg/g of dae Vs Total phenolics (mg/g of dae) in different extracts | 0.967 | 0.934 | y = 0.708x + 6.828 |
| 4 | Total antioxidant in mg/g of dae Vs Total flavonoids (mg/g of dae) in different extracts | 0.838 | 0.702 | y = 0.872x + 77.41 |
| 5 | Extract Yield (%) Vs Total phenolics (mg/g of dae) in different extracts | 0.603 | 0.363 | y = 0.093x + 8.481 |
| 6 | Extract Yield (%) Vs Total flavonoids (mg/g of dae) in different extracts | 0.381 | 0.145 | y = 0.084x + 19.98 |
| 7 | Total flavonoids (mg/g of dae) in different extracts Vs Total phenolics (mg/g of dae) in different extracts | 0.909 | 0.825 | y = 0.639x - 49.11 |
| 8 | Total antioxidant in mg/g of dae Vs DPPH scavenging $EC_{50}$ value (µg/ml) | -0.969 | 0.939 | y = -0.395x + 303.0 |

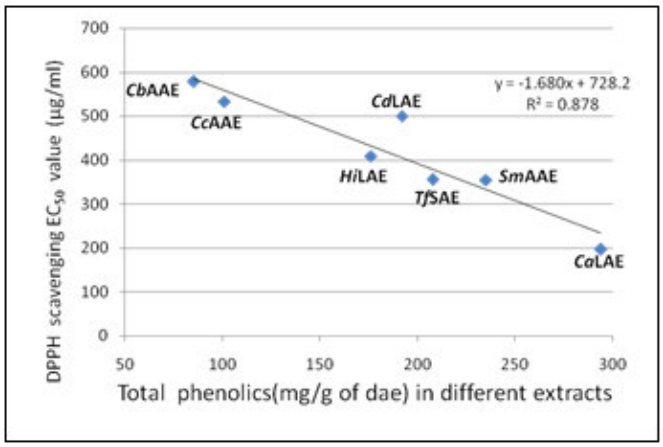


**Figure 2**
***Showing a linear negative correlation between DPPH scavenging $EC_{50}$ value (Y axis) and total phenolics contents (X axis) of the seven test extracts.***

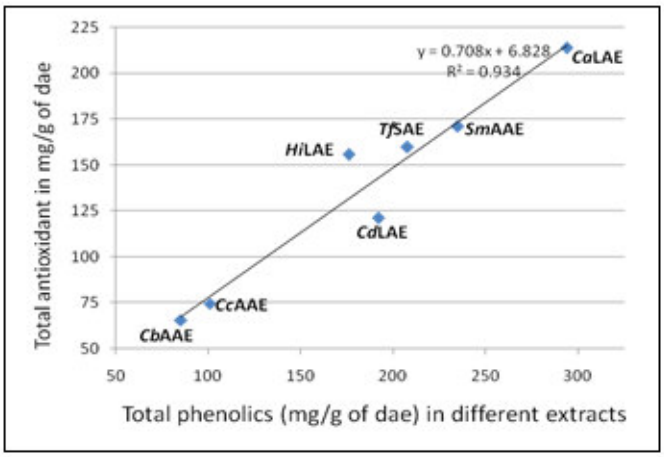


**Figure 3**
***Showing a positive linear correlation between total antioxidant capacity (Y axis) and total phenolics contents (X axis) of the seven test extracts.***

## DISCUSSION

Screening of medicinal plants, isolation and characterization of antioxidants of natural sources has gained renewed interest to identify suitable antioxidant compounds to replace the synthetic one.[58] Ethnomedicinally important antitumor plant products (leaves of: *C. dichotoma*, *H. integrifolia, C. asiaticum*; aerial parts of: *C. bonplandianum*, *C. carnosa* and seeds of: *T. foenum-graecum*) are frequently used in herbal medicine.[29,30,41,42,46,48,55,56] Several acute diseases are associated to free radical induced cellular damage and oxidative stress. Here, antioxidant potentials in terms of total antioxidant and free radical (DPPH) scavenging activities of seven antitumor plant products' aqueous extracts were evaluated *in vitro* with relative total phenols and flavonoids content. The DPPH free radical scavenging activities of the test extracts were compared to standard curve, prepared from ascorbic acid solutions. Data indicate that different extracts were with differential capacity to scavenge the DPPH free radicals and thus varies in $EC_{50}$ values (table. 1 and fig. 2). The efficiency in free radical scavenging activity, perhaps, related with the total phenolics and flavonoid contents, as they have high redox potentials and is considered as efficient reducing agents, singlet oxygen quenchers and hydrogen donors.[71] Free radical scavenging by reducing potentials and thus stabilizing cellular molecules by blocking the oxidation of organic molecules are an important attribute of phenolics. Due to significant antioxidant activity phenolics have effective role on disease prevention and body maintenance. Positive correlation found between the reduced occurrence of degenerative diseases like arthritis, cancer, heart disease, brain dysfunction, inflammation, cataracts etc., and the habit of polyphenolic compounds containing food consumption.[72,73] Here, out of the seven aqueous extracts tested, *Ca*LAE has shown the most potency in free radicals (DPPH) scavenging and also in total antioxidant activity (ascorbic acid equivalent) in comparison to the other extracts, who were found in decreasing order of potentials, as follows *Sm*AAE > *Tf*SAE > *Hi*LAE > *Cd*LAE > *Cc*AAE > *Cb*AAE. The most effectiveness of *Ca*LAE may be as a result of the presence of relatively higher amount of phenolics, which are the major secondary metabolites of plant, and are the primary antioxidants of their extracts.[74] Several elaborate studies have recognized previously that phytochemicals' antioxidant activities are mainly attributable to its phenolic constituents.[13,14,15] The correlation of coefficient (r) and coefficient of

determination ($r^2$) of all the extracts for their phenolic or flavonoid contents and antioxidant activities was determined (table 4). Our results indicate (a) linear negative correlation among total phenolic content and DPPH scavenging $EC_{50}$ values (fig. 2), (b) total phenolic contents are correlated to total antioxidant activities in linear positive manner (fig. 3), (c) negative linear correlation among total antioxidant and DPPH scavenging $EC_{50}$ value, (d) positive linear correlation between flavonoids and phenolics quantity, (e) poor correlation between total flavonoids and extract value, (f) poor correlation between extract value and total phenolics of the tested seven different extracts (Table 4). Here, the highest phenolics content of *Ca*LAE correlated to the maximum total antioxidant and DPPH scavenging activity. Moreover, *Ca*LAE shows positive correlation between total phenolics and total flavonoids. There are previous reports of positive correlation in between total phenolics and antioxidant activities of phytochemicals.[75] The differential free radical scavenging and antioxidant property of the extracts tested here and also both maximised in *Ca*LAE, perhaps, due to the presence of corresponding varied degree of flavonoids and/or phenolics. Correlation analysis further indicates polar solvent, water, could extract effective amounts of phytochemicals and the extract values of the different extracts are poorly correlated with their phenols and flavonoids contents. In summary, aqueous extracts of seven Indian antitumor plants were studied for antioxidant potentials and the *Ca*LAE was found to be the most efficient free radical scavenger and it may be due to the highest phenolics content. Now, further work is needed to isolate and characterise the free radical scavenger compounds and *in vivo* assessment for antioxidant and cyto-genotoxic potentials of *Ca*LAE.

## FUNDING ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The authors gratefully acknowledge the financial support of the UGC {F.No.42-563/2013 (SR) dt. 22.3.13}, UGC-DRS and infrastructural supports of the Department of Zoology (DST-FIST and UGC-DRS Sponsored Department), The University of Burdwan, West Bengal, India.

### *ABBREVIATIONS*

***Ca*LAE** Leaf aqueous extract of *Crinum asiaticum*
***Cb*AAE** Aerial parts aqueous extract of *Croton bonplandianum*
***Cc*AAE** Aerial parts aqueous extract of *Cayratia carnosa*
***Cd*LAE** Leaf aqueous extract of *Cordia dichotoma*
**DPPH** 1,1-diphenyl-2-picrylhydrazyl
***Hi*LAE** Leaf aqueous extract of *Holoptelea integrifolia*
**ROS** Reactive Oxygen Species
***Sm*AAE** Aerial parts aqueous extract of *Scadoxus multiflorus*
***Tf*SAE** Seeds Aqueous Extract of *Trigonella foenum-graecum*

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Conflict of interest declared none.

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We sincerely thank the above reviewers for peer reviewing the manuscript