

## THE NUMERICAL COMPARISON OF ANATOMICAL FEATURES OF LAMIACEAE TAXA ON SPIL MOUNTAIN

Ali Özdemir<sup>1,a</sup>, Canan Ödemir<sup>2,b,\*</sup>



<sup>1</sup>Celal Bayar University, Faculty of Art and Science, Department of Mathematics, Manisa, Turkey

<sup>2</sup>Celal Bayar University, Faculty of Art and Science, Department of Biology, Manisa, Turkey

\*Corresponding Author:

E-mail: [cozdemir13@gmail.com](mailto:cozdemir13@gmail.com)

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a:  ORCID 0000-0001-9330-7084, b:  ORCID 0000-0003-1316-4146

**ABSTRACT.** Lamiaceae family to which the investigated taxa belong are of high importance for their antioxidant potential, multiple pharmaceutical uses in folk medicine. In this study, the anatomical features of some taxa (*Origanum sipyleum*, *Satureja parnassica* subsp. *sipylea*, *Sideritis sipylea*, *Thymus sipyleus* subsp. *sipyleus* var. *sipyleus*) belonging to the Lamiaceae distributed on the Spil Mountain of Turkey were compared statistically. The some anatomical features of the stem were selected and measurements were taken. The data obtained from the anatomical features were evaluated statistically. The results showed that investigated taxa also could be distinguished from each other not only by their morphological features but numerical anatomical characters as well.

**Keywords:** *anatomy, lamiaceae, numerical analysis, statistical analysis*

### INTRODUCTION

Spil Mountain which is the natural distribution area of the studied taxa, is located west of Turkey starts from the 60m level of the Gediz River plain and reaches a height of 1517 meters. The investigated taxa take their names from the mountain. Lamiaceae family to which the taxa belong are of high importance for their antioxidant potential, multiple pharmaceutical uses in folk medicine, and commercial essential oils as well as their wide cosmetic and culinary applications. More specifically, the genera *Origanum* and *Satureja* have found a wide variety of pharmaceutical and food applications [1]. The genus *Origanum*, as an important ethnomedicinal plant, is found in the Mediterranean region, North Africa, and Eurasia [2]. The genus *Satureja* including about 200 species mainly grows in West Asia, Middle East, Europe, North Africa, Mediterranean region, and South America [3]. *Sideritis* L. comprises more than 150 annual and perennial species and subspecies worldwide [4] and most of them are to be found as wild-growing plants in countries around the Mediterranean Basin and the Caspian Sea [5]; many among them are confined to small geographical areas being exclusive endemics either to single islands (e.g. Crete, Greece; Canary islands, Spain), single countries (e.g. Spain, Morocco, Italy, Greece, Turkey etc.) or a couple of adjacent countries e.g. Balkans or Greece, and Turkey [6]. The genus *Thymus* L. consists of about 215 species of herbaceous perennials and subshrubs. The Mediterranean region can be described as the center of the genus [7].

Most previous studies have revealed the chemical composition and antioxidant capacity of some of the species in the Lamiaceae family including *Origanum* [2], *Satureja*

[8-10]. *Thymus* [11,12]. Anatomical studies of Lamiaceae have been carried out by many authors; however, anatomical studies carried out on the investigated taxa were limited with several authors [13]. We have not found any studies on statistical comparison of numerical anatomical features, such as this one we have just done.

In this study, the stem anatomical properties of *Origanum sipyleum* L. *Satureja parnassica* subsp. *sipylea*, *Sideritis sipylea*, *Thymus sipyleus* subsp. *sipyleus* var. *sipyleus* species belonging to Lamiaceae, which are localized Spil Mountain in Turkey, were investigated. The anatomical variations in the taxa have been investigated by means of numerical methods. Results were supported by tables and graphs. The purpose was to determine statistically the clonseness of the taxa with the help of numerical anatomic characters.

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

The plant samples were collected from Spil Mountain in the western Anatolian region of Turkey where they grow naturally. They were collected in 2019 during their flowering period, from March to August. The research was primarily completed in three stages: field study, where plants were taken, laboratory studies where anatomical studies were performed, and statistical studies in which the obtained results were evaluated mathematically. The plant samples were fixed in 70% ethyl alcohol (C<sub>2</sub>H<sub>5</sub>OH). For microscopic observations, sections were taken from the stem parts of the plant and were stained using saffron and fastgreen dyes [14]. Preparations prepared from these sections were examined using Leica DM3000 motorized microscope lenses. Some stem anatomical characters (epidermis, cortex diameter, tracheal diameter, pith diameter) were selected for the numerical analysis. Measurements were made in these structures. Minimum, maximum, average and standart error values were determined and these values were turned into tables. Characters were coded as 1- 6 and the taxa were coded as A-D (Table 1). Significance of the differences between the taxa and characters were evaluated by Analysis of variance and Pearson's correlation. Statistical analysis were performed using the MINITAB software package.

**Table 1.** Codes of the examined taxa and anatomical features

The examined taxa	Code	Anatomical features	Code
<i>Origanum sipyleum</i>	A	Epidermis length	1
<i>Satureja parnassica</i> subsp. <i>sipylea</i>	B	Epidermis width	2
<i>Sideritis sipylea</i>	C	Cortex length (µm)	3
<i>Thymus sipyleus</i> subsp. <i>sipyleus</i> . var. <i>sipyleus</i>	D	Cortex width (µm)	4
		Diameter of tracheal elements (µm)	5
		Diameter of pith	6

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Anatomical Findings

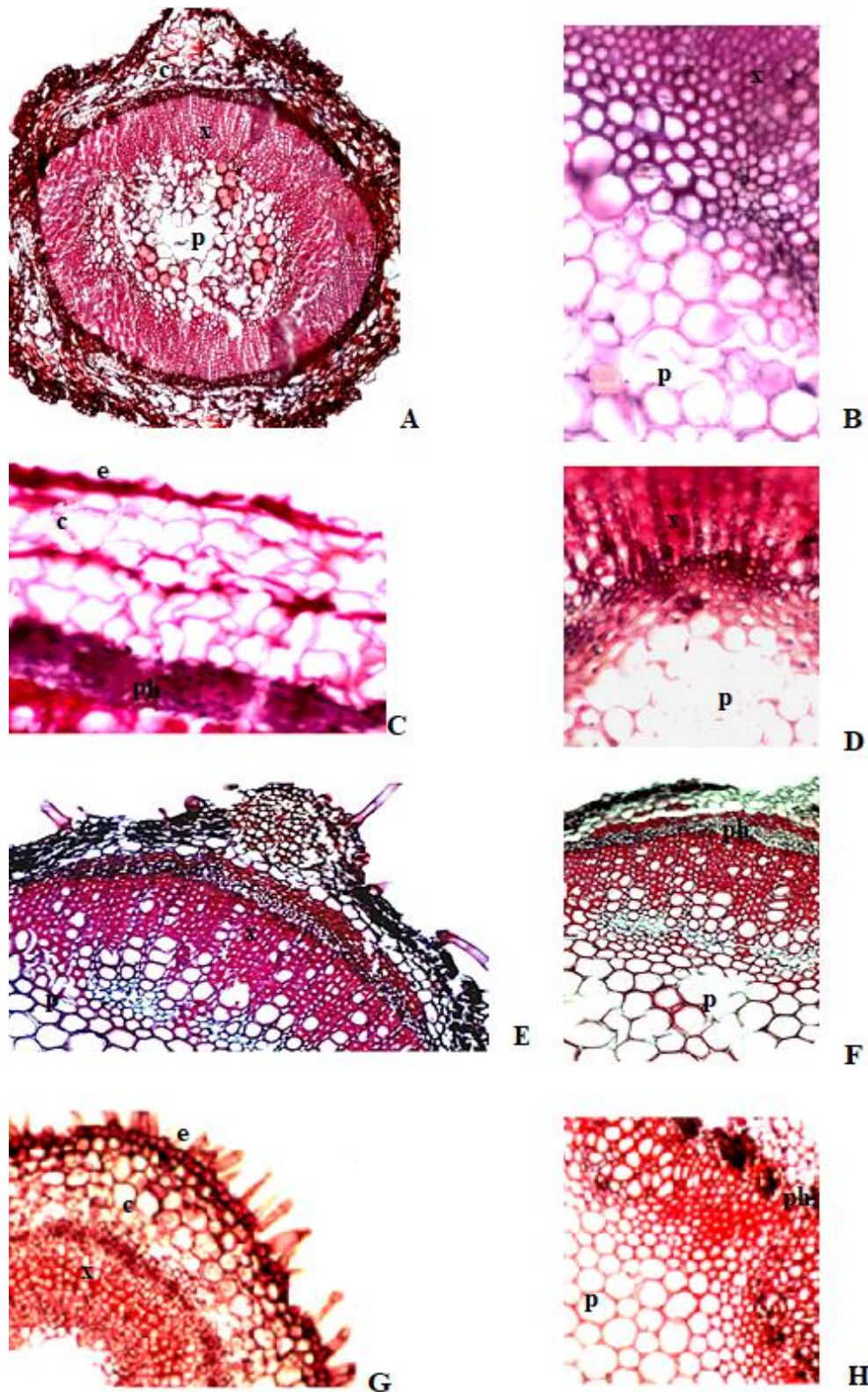
*Origanum sipyleum*: The stem cross-section is in the form of a protruding circle or it has squared similar to round shape. Epidermis cells are fragmented in places and are oval and rectangular in shape. Below the epidermis are large-diameter parenchyma cells with

thickened walls as collenchyma tissue. The phloem region is prominent and located just above the xylem. Xylem elements take up a very large area. There is a large pith cavity in the center of the stem and smooth circular pithy parenchyma cells cover this cavity (Fig. 1A-B)

*Satureja parnassica* subsp. *sipylea*: Cross-section of the stem is 4-cornered. Epidermis cells of stem are oval, rectangular or square shaped. It is composed of a single cells, and covered with a thick and undulated cuticle. There are 5-8 rows of cortex parenchyma. Between the cortex layer, there is a cell layer with thickened walls consisting of a single row of rings. The collenchyma tissue, located on the corner stem. The cambium is not distinguishable. The region of pith occupies a large area in the cross-section. (Fig. 1C-D).

*Sideritis sipylea*: Cross-section of the stem is 4-cornered. Collenchyma is seen in corners as wide and shallow. Epidermis cells are oval, rectangular or nearly square in shape. There are many aglandular and glandular hairs on the epidermis. At the corners of the stem, there are cells collenchyma and under the epidermis, there are cells with chlorophyll consisting of 1-8 cell lines. Below these cells, there are the cortex parenchyma of 1-3 rows rectangular and oval in shape. The phloem area is clearly and there are clusters of scleranchyma cell on it. 2-3 rows of cambium are found at the stem. The region of pith is wide in the center and consists of circular parenchyma cells (Fig. 1E-F).

*Thymus sipyleus* subsp. *sipyleus* var. *sipyleus*: Cross-section of the stem has squared shape. Epidermis cells are oval, rectangular or nearly square in shape. There is a thin cuticle layer on the epidermis. There are many aglandular and glandular hairs on the epidermis. In the corners of the stem, there is a cluster of collenchyma cells. Under these cells, there are cells of cortex parenchyma of 1-5 rows are rectangular and oval in shape. The phloem region is not evident. There is a scleranchyma ring on elements of vascular. The xylem elements are very distinct and the trachea are sometimes irregularly arranged. The pith region in the center of the stem is wide and consists of circular parenchyma cells (Fig. 1G-H).



**Fig. 1.** Stem cross-section of taxa (A-B: *Origanum sipylea*; C-D: *Satureja parnassica* subsp. *sipylea*; E-F: *Sideritis sipylea*; G-H: *Thymus sipyleus* subsp. *sipyleus* var. *sipyleus* (Microscope objective numbers: A:x4; B, D, G: x10; C, E, F, H:x20)  
e: epidermis cells, x:xsilem, c:cortex layer; p:pith, ph:phloem)

### **Results of Statistical Analysis**

The anatomical measurements of the investigated taxa were shown in Table 2. Significance of the differences between the investigated taxa and anatomical characters was evaluated by analysis of variance and Pearson correlation. While the results between the taxa examined according to the Pearson correlation method are given in Table 3, the results obtained according to the variance analysis method are given in Table 4. According to both methods of statistical analysis, there are the statistical differences among (*O. sipyleum*-*S. parnassica* subsp. *sipylea*) and (*O. sipyleum*-*S. sipylea*) in the values 0.005; 0.005; 0.001 and 0.002 respectively at level of 0,01\*\* and 0.05\* (Table 3,4).

According to both statistical methods, it was determined that the taxon encoded with D *Thymus sipyleus* subsp. *sipyleus* var. *sipyleus* was not statistically significant with the other taxa studied. The fact that the taxon is not close to the other taxa systematically examined shows that it confirms the statistical results. As observed in laboratory studies also, *Thymus sipyleus* subsp. *sipyleus* var. *sipyleus* that encoded with D differs from other investigated taxa due to the different anatomical features such as the unclear phloem region. Thus, this result supports the statistical results.

When the anatomical features were evaluated with both statistical analysis methods, there were differences between the characters (cortex length-cortex width), (cortex length-diameter of pith) and (cortex width-diameter of pith) in the values 0.001; 0.018; and 0.017 respectively at level of 0,01\*\* and 0.05\* (Table 4,5). On the other hand, according to method of Pearson correlation, there are also the differences between epidermis length and diameter of tracheal in the value 0.029 at level of 0.05\* (Table 5). According to result of variance analysis, significant differences also were found between (cortex length-diameter of tracheal) and (cortex width-diameter of tracheal) in the values 0.047 and 0.050 respectively at level of 0.05\* (Table 6).

The examined taxa carry the characteristics of the family they belong to (Lamiaceae). The researchers emphasized that the typical feature of the family is a four-cornered body and a well-developed collenchyma tissue at the corners of the body as a support tissue [15]. Similar features were also seen in the anatomical structures of the studied taxa. While a collenchyma layer is observed at the corners all of the investigated taxa stem, while this layer shows a different distribution on the body in taxa.

However, any extraxilar sclerenchymatic tissue is not seen in stem the studied taxa except to *Sideritis sipylea*, as not seen in *L. lycium* and in *L. moschatum* var. *rhodium*, either [16,17]. Many genera of Lamiaceae, even annual taxa, usually bear extraxilar sclerenchymatic tissues in their stems [19-24].

By the analysis of the investigated taxa from 6 stem anatomy related characters, it has been determined that cortex length and diameter of pith are the best character pairs which represent the variations in them. Thus, the cortex length and diameter of pith can be viewed as a taxonomic character for classification of species.

In this study, four Lamiaceae taxa that spread in Spil Mountain compared statistically regarding anatomical characters. The anatomical variations in the taxa have been investigated by means of numerical methods (analysis of variance and Pearson correlation). Similar statistical study has been carried out on some *Salvia* L. belong to family Lamiaceae by some researchers [25]. On the other hand, similar to the results of our study, statistically significant results were obtained in studies on numerical anatomical features of plants belonging to different families [26]. We aimed to find statistical and anatomical differences in addition to morphological characters to

distinguish these taxa. The results showed that investigated taxa also could be distinguished from each other not only by their morphological features but numerical anatomical characters as well. By the analysis of the investigated taxa from some anatomy related characters, it has been also found that the results from numerical analysis of anatomy characters can provide additional evidences, which correspond to the anatomy for the recognition of the taxa.

**Table 2.** Measurement results of some stem anatomical structures of examined the taxa

	<i>Origanum sipyleum</i>		<i>Satureja parnassica</i> subsp. <i>sipylea</i>	
	Min-Max	Mean±SD	Min-Max	Mean±SD
Epidermis width (µm)	05,29-10,58	07,13±02,41	10,70-14,00	12,35±06,20
Epidermis length (µm)	10,25-26,45	18,50.±07,90	15,24-25,45	15,25±08,20
Cortexwidth (µm)	06,25-12,55	09,12±05,06	10,24-15,20	12,56±07,88
Cortex length (µm)	10,10-15,87	12,56.±07,88	03,54-35,00	19,50±09,60
Diameter of tracheal elements (µm)	11,14-37,00	24,12±09,82	11,40- 32,25	21,35±09,45
Diameter of pith (µm)	26,45-84,64	55,56±17,80	10,50-52,90	31,5.±12,80
	<i>Sideritis sipylea</i>		<i>Thymus sipyleus</i> subsp. <i>sipyleus</i> . var. <i>sipyleus</i>	
	Min-Max	Mean±SD	Min-Max	Mean±SD
Epidermis width (µm)	12,70-13,70	12,13±06,21	10,59-10,70	10,03±08,40
Epidermis length (µm)	16,70-18,70	17,50±07,80	15,37-37,80	27,10±11,40
Cortex width (µm)	10,24-15,29	12,56±07,48	11,53-26,47	17,05±08,06
Cortex length (µm)	15,70-23,80	19,50.±08,18	15,60-43,70	28,05±10,40
Diameter of tracheal elements (µm)	10,40- 42,35	26,38±11,45	05,21-21,16	12,10-04,82
Diameter of pith (µm)	15,80-63,48	39,5.±12,88	10,50-15,87	12,50±08,60

Min: Minimum, Max: Maksimum, SD: Standard Deviation

**Table 3.** Pearson correlation based on the investigated taxa

	A	B	C
B	0,940 0,005*		
C	0,986 0,001**	0,972 0,001**	
D	0,142 0,789	0,235 0,654	0,200 0,704

Significant at the level of P< 0.05. \*\* Significant at the level of 0.01.

Probability: P value; Abbreviations: A-D: Codes of investigated taxa,

A: *Origanum sipyleum* ; B: *Satureja parnassica* subsp. *sipylea*

C: *Sideritis sipylea*; D: *Thymus sipyleus* subsp. *sipyleus*. var. *sipyleus*

**Table 4. Correlation between taxon (Analysis of Variance)**

Source	MS	F-value	Probability	Significance
A-B	242,9	30,36	0,005	**
A-C	135,9	81,77	0,018	**
A-D	5,520	0,080	0,761	NS
B-C	357,5	27,00	0,002	**
B-D	90,03	43,40	05,43	NS
C-D	21,40	17,30	0,704	NS

MS: Mean Square; \*P<.05; \*\*P<.01; A-D: Codes of taxon; NS:Not Significant; Probability: P value

A: *Origanum sipyleum* ; B: *Satureja parnassica* subsp. *sipylea*

C: *Sideritis sipylea*; D: *Thymus sipyleus* subsp. *sipyleus*. var. *sipyleus*

**Table 5. Pearson correlation based on anatomical characters**

	1	2	3	4	5
2	0,296				
	0,704				
3	0,518	0,637			
	0,482	0,363			
4	0,477	0,671	0,999		
	0,523	0,329	0,001**		
5	0,029*	0,802	0,792	0,815	
	0,971	0,198	0,208	0,185	
6	0,468	0,618	0,982	0,983	0,863
	0,532	0,382	0,018*	0,017*	0,137

Significant at the level of P< 0.05. \*\* Significant at the level of 0.01; Probability: P value

Abbreviations: A-D: Codes of anatomical features

- |                       |                              |
|-----------------------|------------------------------|
| 1: Epidermis length   | 4: Cortex width (µm)         |
| 2: Epidermis width    | 5: Diameter of tracheal (µm) |
| 3: Cortex length (µm) | 6: Diameter of pith          |

**Table 6.** Correlation between anatomical features (Analysis of Variance)

Source	MS	F-value	Probability	Significance
1-2	1,48	0,19	0,704	NS
1-3	4,51	0,71	0,485	NS
1-4	3,81	0,59	0,525	NS
1-5	0,12	0,01	0,910	NS
1-6	3,60	0,52	0,561	NS
2-3	31,1	1,37	0,368	NS
2-4	35,6	1,62	0,321	NS
2-5	50,0	3,64	0,198	NS
2-6	30,0	1,16	0,382	NS
3-4	31,5	90,0	0,001	**
3-5	37,8	28,1	0,047	*
3-6	30,6	53,1	0,018	*
4-5	74,5	74,3	0,050	*
4-6	90,2	57,0	0,017	*
5-6	83,13	5,24	0,137	NS

MS: Mean Square; \*P<.05; \*\*P<.01;

1-6: Codes of anatomical features; NS: Not Significant.

1: Epidermis length                      4: Cortex width (µm)  
 2: Epidermis width                      5: Diameter of tracheal (µm)  
 3: Cortex length (µm)                    6: Diameter of pith

## CONCLUSION

In the present study, the some taxa were compared statistically regarding numeric anatomical characters. The results showed that investigated taxa also could be distinguished from each other not only by their morphological features but numerical anatomical characters as well. As a result of statistical analysis, it was observed that these characters have statistical significance values at level of 0,01 and 0.05. Thus, the characters can be viewed as a taxonomic characters for classification of taxa.

### Significance Statement

We aimed to find statistically and anatomical differences in addition to morphological characters to distinguish the taxa. Since the some taxa is systematically a problematic, it is necessary to use alternative methods to distinguish them. Numerical anatomical features and statistical evaluations of the taxa can be used to distinguish these taxa. It has been also found that the results from can provide additional evidences that correspond to the anatomy for the recognition of taxa. As a result, we believe that the study provides a new comparing opportunity for future researchers on the related subjects.



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