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RESEARCH ARTICLE

STUDY OF THE ETHNO- MEDICINAL - IMPORTANCE OF SOME PLANT SPECIES AMONG FLORA OF NORTH – WEST RAJASTHAN

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Abstract

Plants play a vital role for the existence of life on the earth. India is one of the richest floristic region of the world and which is globally known for its rich traditional heritage regarding the herbal plants and herbal drugs. This paper emphasizes the description of some plant species belonging to different families with their medicinal importance which are found among the flora of study region. The indigenous people of the study area play a significant role in using the medicinal plants in traditional herbal and folk remedies. Their indigenous belief, knowledge, skills and cultural practices are concerned with human health. Most of the indigenous people of study area use different parts of plants such as root, rhizome, tuber, stem, leaves, fruit etc for various requirement of their daily life such as food, fodder, fuel, fiber, shelter, clothing and mainly for primary health care. They use mainly plant products based phyto- therapy for the elimination of different diseases. The traditional knowledge about use medicinal flora of study area is degraded day by day. So there is the need of the conservation or preservation of traditional knowledge about the medicinal flora of study area for the benefit of future generation through recording and documenting that traditional knowledge. This step is also a necessary step for the conservation of those plant species among the flora of study area who are in danger of extinction.

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INTRODUCTION

India is one of the floristic region of the world which act as a good hot spot for the growth of herbal plants and drug yielding plants due to their variable and favorable climatic and environmental conditions. These herbal plants are used by indigenous people or tribal people for the treatment of various disease or health problems. North - West Rajasthan cover the most parts of great Indian Thar desert. It lies between 26° 23' to 30° 6' North latitude and 69° 75' to 74° 1' East longitude and comprises the administrative districts, Bikaner, Nagaur, Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, Sri Ganganagar. This region is a potential source of phytodiversity. This region exhibits great variety of geology, physiography, climate, edaphic and biotic conditions that represents diversity of plants which occur in the wide range of habitat. This paper emphasizes the use of 12 herbal and medicinal plant species among the medicinal flora of study region for the treatment of various health problem. The indigenous or tribal people believe on the traditional knowledge on the medicinal importance of local plants and their products in the form of folk remedies and for primary health care. The present study is aimed to create awareness about the medicinal important of 12 local plant species belonging to different families and their uses which draw the attention of pharmacologist, phytochemists and pharmaceutical industries.

MATERIALS AND METHODS:

To collect and documents these valuable information, several field trips were conducted in all parts of the study region. Interviews were conducted with old age or experienced people of various communities as they possess inherited traditional knowledge regarding medicinal importance of local plants in case of primary health care or the treatment of various health problems. Repeated enquiries and group discussion on medicinal use of same plants were made to ascertain the authenticity of information.

OBSERVATION AND DISSCUSSION

Twelve important ethno medicinal plants are described here with their local name, family and their medicinal uses which are formed in the study area.

1. *Acacia nilotica* (L.) Willd .ex Delile.

Family – Fabaceae /Mimosaceae.

Local name – Kikar /Babool

Medicinal uses :- Powder of crushed bark is used in case of skin diseases and for the treatment of bleeding piles, asthma, bronchitis. Paste of inner bark is act as antidote against honey bee -sting, wasp sting or any insect bite. Leaves of this plant are eaten in case of throat infection. Young twigs are used as toothbrush. Gum with the latex of *Calotropis procera* is used to cure urinary and vaginal discharges and useful in case diabetes. Pods of this plant is used in case of sexual impotency and urinogenital disorders. The gum of this plant which is taken orally for the treatment of diarrhea and dysentery.

2. *Argemone mexicana* Linn.

Family :- Papaveraceae

Local name :- Pili kanteli, Satynasi

Medicinal uses:- Latex of this plants is used in pain incase Rheumatism. Seed powder is used as antidote to snake poison. Powdery seed is also useful in case of asthma, headache and stomach complaints. Oil of this plant is used in case epithalamia, scabies and other skin problems. Latex is also used in case of syphilis.

3. *Balanites aegyptiaca* (Linn.) Del.

Family –Balanitaceae

Local name: - Hingota, Hingori

Medicinal uses:- Paste of fruit (mature fruit) is useful in case of boils, leucoderma and other skin diseases. Fruit pulp is useful in case of whooping cough. The powdery mature fruit is useful in case of preventing pregnancy. Root decoction is useful in case of dysentery. The leaves of this plant are purgative as antihelminthic.

4. *Clerodendrum phlomidis* Linn.

Family :-Verbenaceae

Local name :- Arni, Yerna, Anni

Medicinal uses:- The leaf juice of this plant species is applied on the male sex organ to cure sexually transmitted disease syphilis. The leaf juice is used in case of pimples and wounds. Seed oil is used as hair tonic. The decoction of leaves with little sugar is used in case joint pains. The fresh leaves tied over the eyes incase of ophthalmia. The paste of root act as antidote incase of snake bite. Bhil tribals prepare the ladoos with the seed powder, ghee and jowar flour and given to cure Rheumatism the decocotion of fresh root is also taken in case of Gonorrhea

5. *Cyperus rotundus* Linn.

Family: - Cyperaceae

Local name :- Moth.

Medicinal uses:- Dried powdery bulb is useful in case of dysentery and Jaundice and urinary complaints. The paste of bulb is useful in case of heat stroke. Root paste is useful in case of wounds and in snake bite. Root powder is useful in case of Jaundice and bowel complaint.

6. *Dalbergia sissoo* Roxb.

Family: - Fabaceae

Local name:- Talli, Shisham

Medicinal uses :- The decoction of leaves is used to cure ,boils, eruption, and other skin disorder and also useful to cure gonorrhea. The tribal people take the paste of leaves orally to cure diabetes and infusion of

leaves for gargling against throat infection. The oil of wood is used for the treatment of paralysis. The powder of dried stem bark is used by the children who are suffering from pneumonia.

7. *Euphorbia caducifolia* L.

Family:- Euphorbiaceae

Local name :- Danda thor

Medicinal uses:- Latex of this plant is used to cure tumors and cutaneous eruption. Latex is heated with common salt and is given in case of whooping cough, asthma, jaundice and in case of leprosy. The roasted paste of stem is applied on the injured part of body to reduce the swelling. Latex is also used to cure body pain.

8. *Moringa oleifera* Lam.

Family:- Moringaceae

Local name:- Sahnjan, Sanjna

Medicinal uses:- Fresh fruit and stem paste crushed with little water and applied to relieve incase of tumors, rheumatic pain and incase of swelling. The fresh leaves extract with milk of goat and sugar is taken in case of dyspepsia.

9. *Prosopis cineraria* (Linn.) Druce

Family:- Mimosaceae

Local name:- Khejra, Khejri,

Medicinal uses:- Flowers of this plant are mixed with sugar and eaten by pregnant ladies for protection against abortion. The dried powder of bark and its paste is useful to cure the pain of rheumatism.

10. *Salvadora persica* Linn.

Family:- Salvadoraceae

Local name:- Mitha pilu, Dhalu, Mithjal

Medicinal uses:- Paste of leaves is used to cure rheumatism pain and scurvy. The decoction of root is useful in case of fever. Bark powder is used to treat the teeth and gum diseases. The leaves are taken orally to cure cough. Paste of leaves with water taken orally by tribals incase of constipation and stomach problems. Root paste with mustard on blisters. Fruit is carminative and diuretic.

11. *Tecomella undulata* (Sm.) Seem.

Family:- Bignoniaceae

Local name:- Rohira, Roheda

Medicinal uses:- The powder of root bark with honey or sugar and milk is taken by women to cure leucorrhoea. The paste of stem bark with vegetable oil is applied in case of eczema. The smoke of the leaves of this plant inhaled by the local people in case of cough. The bark powder of this plant is used in case of diabetes. The extract of leaves are used to cure eye diseases. Decoction of bark and leaves are taken in case of cold, cough, and fever. Bark is boiled with milk and taken which can help to dissolve and scatter the clotted blood.

12. *Withania somnifera* (Linn.) Dunal.

Family:- Solanaceae

Local name:- Ashwagandha

Medicinal uses:- Leaves are useful in case of painful swelling and paste of leaves is also used in case of some eye troubles. Powder of dried root is useful in case of asthma and bronchitis. Roots and leaves are used to cure tumor and cancer. Decoction of root is used as tonic incase of stress and depression. Warm leaves are used in case of swelling and Rheumatic pain.

CONCLUSION:-

The study has revealed the traditional uses of 12 medicinal plants of the study area for the treatment of various diseases such as Cough, asthma, leucorrhoea, Fever, headache, stomach complaints and so many other disorders of health. The plants with their parts and products are used by the indigenous or tribal people in form of folk remedies or various for phyto-therapies. So such type of study can prove a very useful step in the documentation of traditional knowledge about medicinal uses of plants and help in the conservation of medicinal floral diversity. Such type of study can help a lot in supporting the matter of drugs and also in protecting the Ayurvedic system of medicine.

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