



Ethnobotanical Study of Medicinal Plants Used by the Tribes of Nalamalai Forests

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Abstract: India is known for its rich tradition in all aspects and in medicines too. An Ethnobotanical study was performed in some parts of Nallamala forests and the information regarding traditional medicines and their way of usage was collected along with dose etc with the help of standard questionnaire and some information is also taken from internet sources. The information for treating 20 ailments were collected which include diabetes, syphilis, insect bites etc. The plants belong to wide range of families approximately of 17 families. Of all the information on plants collected leaves are most widely used part and for most of the diseases the juice of the leaves are given orally, while some include application on skin, application on eyes etc. The current study deals with the uses of different traditional medicine by the tribals of nallamala forest for treating different ailments

Keywords: Ethnobotanical study, Ailments, Nalamalai forest, Traditional medicine, Plant species, etc.

1. INTRODUCTION

India has nearly 4,70,000 plant species. Of these 50,000 are limited to only one region. More than 8000 plant species are used as tribal medicine in India. For village medicine 5000 species, 700 plant species are used in Unani, in Ayurvedic medicine 800 plant species are used. From the above information the importance of tribal medicine can be understood. [4]

The Nallamala forest extends over Nellore, Guntur, Kurnool, Kadapa, Chittoor districts of Andhra Pradesh and some parts of Telangana, Karnataka. The highest peak of Nallamala forest is the Bairani Konda also known as Sikhreshwaram. The Nallamala forest has mostly warm to hot climate throughout the year. It has an average rainfall of 90 cm [2]. The soil of the Nallamala forest in the Kurnool region is mainly the calcareous shale [3]. The geographical area of the 17,658 sq. km. The main tribal population of this region includes the Chenchus, Lambadas, Sugalis, Yerukalas, etc [1]. Others are also different categories of Chenchus like Mandli, Pitta, Kokala, Kudumula, Dhamsani etc. Srisailem, Ahobilam etc are some of the pilgrimages in this Nallamala region. The main reason for the abundance of the herbal or medicinal plants in this region is the prolific soil, satisfying climate and topography [3].

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

An ethnobotanical study was performed in the Nallamala forest of Kurnool region in Andhra Pradesh. A standard questionnaire was prepared before the study. The tribals of the area were enquired about the various traditional medicines used by them for treating various ailments which also include medical experts. The various ailments in the current study include arthritis, gonorrhoea, snake bites, diabetes, dandruff, malaria, kidney stones, pimples, sprains etc. The vernacular names were collected along with the disease for which it is used and the part of the plant used is also collected and its usage.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

With the aid of standard questionnaire a study was done in the Nallamala region and the information regarding various plants used for treating different ailments was collected along with the part used, the family to which the plant belongs, its usage, and to which disease it is used for and some information is collected from internet sources. The information for treating 20 ailments was collected. The various ailments in the current study include arthritis, gonorrhoea, snake bites, diabetes, dandruff, malaria, kidney stones, pimples, sprains etc. The plants used belong to families of Fabaceae, Malvaceae, Loganiaceae, Anacardiaceae, Annonaceae, Combretaceae, Euphorbiaceae, Caesalpinaceae.

Of the above plants, 4 of them belong to loganiaceae family, 2 belong to fabaceae family and one plant for each of all families .For most of the diseases leaves of the plant are used, and for some roots, bark, seeds and fruits are also used. The examples of the plants include Phyllanthus amarus for diabetes, Butea monosperma for jaundice, Benincasa hispida for dandruff, and Andrographis paniculata for malaria fever, etc.

4. CONCLUSION

From the above study the knowledge about the various traditional medicinal plants used for treating various ailments was gained. Use of herbal medicines has been followed since ages but the development of modern or allopathic drugs made the use of herbal plants less priority. But the herbal plants are still been potently used for treating various diseases as observed in the nalamalai forests.

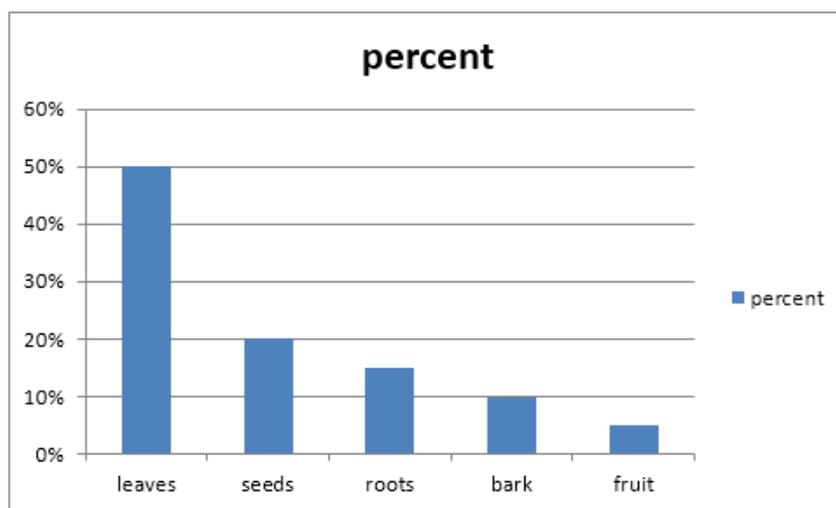


Fig1. A bar graph showing various parts of the plants and their percents in the current study

Table1. Number of species collected belonging to various families

FAMILY	NUMBER OF PLANTS BELONGING TO THE FAMILY
ANACARDIACEAE	1
EUPHORBIA CEAE	1
AMARANTHACEAE	1
MALVACEAE	1
LOGANIACEAE	4
CAESSALPINIACEAE	1
COMBRETACEAE	1
ARECACEAE	1
ANNONACEAE	1
CUCURBITACEAE	1
ACANTHACEAE	1
FABACEAE	2
PAPAYERACEAE	1
LAMINACEAE	1
SAXIFRAGACEAE	1

Table2. A brief description of various plants their vernacular name, scientific name, family, part of the plant used, disease and its usage.

Species	Vernacular name	Family	Treating disease	Part used	Usage
1.Lannea coromandalica	Pedda barnika	Anacardiaceae	Mouth infections	Leaves	Leaves are given in a juice form 5 times a day
2.Phyllanthus amarus	Nela oosari	Euphorbiaceae	Diabetes	Leaves	Nelaoosari, pepper, gymnema sylvestre are powdered and taken with honey.
3.Gomphrena serrata	Chirunallintha	Amaranthaceae	Gonorrhoea	Roots	Roots are triturated and filtered. the juice is applied with cotton.

4.Abtilon indicum	Thuthuru benda	Malvaceae	Menstrual problems	Roots	Roots are dried and used until cure.
5.Strychnus potatorum	Chilla ginja	Loganiaceae	Insect bite	seeds	Seeds are dipped in water and pressed on wound
6.Caeselpinia bonduc	Billa gacha	Caeselpiniaceae	Arthritis	Roots	Bonduc and forest garlic are mixed and applied in legs.
7.Terminalia arjuna	Naramamidi chekka	Combretaceae	Sprains	Bark	Latex is taken and made juice and used for 15 days.
8.Arecaceae	Eetha	Arecaceae	Throat infection	Leaves	Juice is extracted from leaves and used till cure.
9.Annona reticulata	Sitapalam	Annonaceae	Dandruff	Leaves	Annona and palm leaves are mixed and boiled and oil is applied.
10.Corollocarpus epigiis	Naga dhonda	Cucurbitaceae	Kidney stones	Leaves	Leaves are taken dried, powdered and taken with water.
11.Andrographus paniculata	Nelavemu	Acanthaceae	Malaria fever	leaves	Andrographus and pepper and garlic paste is made and used.
12.Butea monosperma	Moduga aaku	Fabaceae	Jaundice	leaves	Gum is taken and applied on eyes for every night.
13.Strychnus nuxvomica	Visha moosti	Loganaceae	Skin problems	Seeds	Seeds are powdered and taken 2 times a day.
14.Strychnus potatorum	Chilla ginja	Loganiaceae	Pimples	Seeds	Paste is taken and applied 2 times a day.
15.Benincasa hispida	Gumadi kaya	Cucurbitaceae	Dandruff	Fruit	Paste is taken and applied.
16.Papaver somniferum	Nallamandu	Papeveraceae	Sedative	latex	Used at night time.
17.Crotolaria verrucosa	Thella eswari	Fabaceae	Snake bite	Leaves	Leaves are taken and made paste and applied on wounds.
18.Leucas linifolia	Thumi tree	Laminaceae	Wounds	Leaves	Leaves are taken and juice is made and applied on wounds.
19.Strychnus nuxvomica	Visha moosti	Loganiaceae	Ringworm	Seeds	Seeds are powdered and taken.
20.Bergenia ciliata	kondapindi leaves	Saxotragaceae	Kidney stones	Leaves	Powdered and taken with water.

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