

ETHNO-BOTANICAL SURVEY OF MEDICINAL PLANTS IN SEMI-MALNAD AREA OF HASSAN DISTRICT, KARNATAKA

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Received: March 21, 2012; Accepted: April 09, 2012

Abstract- In the ethno-botanical survey of medicinal plants of Hassan district, about 93 sps, of naturally growing and frequently used medicinal plants were collected belonging to 48 families. Of which 31 sps. Trees, 18 sps. shrubs, 26 sps. herbs, and 18 sps. climbers. Among these population, *Costus speciosus* (Koem.ex.Retz) Sm., *Rauvolfia serpentina* (L.) Benth.ex Kurz., *Tinospora cordifolia* (Willd.) Miers. *Saraca asoca* (Roxb)de Wilde)., *Adathoda zeylanica* Medic., *Cassia fistula* L. *Abrus precatorius* L. *Terminalia bellirica* (Gaerth). Roxb. etc., are reducing day-by-day due to over-exploitation for medicinal purposes by ethnic people, felling for timber, etc. During the exploration, emphasis was given on herbal treatment for everyday common ailments and diseases particularly used by the ethnic people of Hassan district such as Arakalagud, Holenarasipura, Alur and Hassan taluks. The study gives an account on the diversity and uses of medicinal plants and priority medicinal plants for conservation.

Keywords- Medicinalplants, Hassandistrict, Conservation, Ethnicpeople

Citation: Ravikumar B.S. and Theerthavathy B.S. (2012) Ethno-botanical survey of medicinal plants in semi-malnad area of hassan district, karnataka. Journal of Pharmacognosy, ISSN: 0976-884X & E-ISSN: 0976-8858, Volume 3, Issue 2, pp.-75-78.

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Introduction

India has about 8 percent of the world's bio-diversity on two percent of the earth's surface area, making it one of the 12 megadiversity countries of the world, due to the species richness and level of endemism recorded in the various agro climatic zones of the country. Medicinal plants as a group, comprise approximately 8,000 species and account for around 50 percent of the higher flowering plant species of India. Even today 75 percent of the world population in developing countries are dependent traditional medicine for their health care (Anthropological Survey of India, 1994). Most of the medicines are prepared and consumed locally using available plants (Biswal et al. 2003). It is estimated that nearly 4,600 ethnic communities are using more than 7,500 species of plants for human and veterinary health care in India. About 1,500 plants with medicinal uses are mentioned in the ancient texts and around 800 plants have been used in traditional medicine. Around 50,000 herbal drug formulations have been developed by traditional medicine systems.

Karnataka state is known for its rich biological diversity, although the natural ecosystems experience threat from recurrent natural calamities. Semi-malnad area of Hassan district, Karnataka is noted for its rich diversity of medicinal plants, apart from wetlands and flood plains serving the habitat requirement of several inhabitant communities. Since time immemorial, semi-malnad area has been the meeting ground of people belonging to different ethnic groups (Kuruba, Jenu kuruba, Bettakuruba, Kadukuruba, Mullukuruba, Urali kuruba, Lambani, Hakkibikki and Kurumba) are the tribals who are intimately associated with the study area. Most of them are kannada speaking hindu and few are muslim community. Most of the Semi-malnad area is used for coffee plantation and the principle crops produced in the plain areas are rice, ragi, sugarcane, potato, jowar, red gram, cardamom, etc. About 90% of the gross cropped area is used for cultivation of rice, potato and coffee plantation. The economy of Semi-malnad is predominated by agriculture and allied sectors. More than 60% of the total working population in semi-malnad area is either cultivators or agricultural

labourers. Home gardens and traditional agro forestry practices are very common and are characterized by their complex structure and multiple functions. Traditional home gardens are the closest mimics of natural forests and support diverse wildlife species besides meet in various social and basic daily life needs. Almost all families of rural areas have such practices. Most of the medicinal plants come from these traditionally managed home gardens and from natural habitat. These are the sites of conservation of a large diversity of plants both wild and domesticated. In the study, ethno botanical aspects semi-malnad area of Hassan district with a special emphasis on the herbal treatment of day-to-day ailments and diseases by different communities of semi-malnad have been documented.

Study area

The study area of Hassan district occupies a western position in the state of Karnataka, and lies between 12°30' and 12°58' N and 75°33' and 76°56' E at an altitude of 945 m and its total geographical area is about 2538 sq km. representing about 37.24 % of the total geographical area of Hassan district with a population of 5.2 lakhs. The topography of the study area is comprised of the hilly and semi arid regions. It occupies eastern part of the western ghat and continuous into the gently rolling Deccan plateau. The district shows a wide range of climatic conditions with a mean daily minimum of 14°C and mean daily maximum of 27°C.

Methodology

Standard methods were followed for the collection of plant materials, mounting, preparation and preservation of plant species. Voucher specimens were collected identified, by referring standard flora [6,7,13]. All the preserved specimens were deposited in the Department of Botany, AVK College for Women, Hassan, The forests are semi evergreen and deciduous type with undulating chain of hills. Local traditional healers having practical knowledge of medicinal plants either for self-medication or for treating others were often visiting the vegetation area of the district to collect plant species. A total of 47 health healers were identified between the ages of 40 and 80 for the survey.

The study was conducted in Arakalagud, Holenarasipura, Alur and Hassan taluks of Hassan district. Based on personal interviews between tribal and non-tribal peoples in normal discussion and observation using questionnaire during the visits. Ethno botanical data viz., local name, mode of preparation, medicinal uses were collected through questionnaire, interviews and discussions among the tribal and health practioners in their local language. Our questionnaire allowed descriptive responses on the plant prescribed, such as part of the plant used, medicinal uses, mode of preparations like decoction, paste or powder etc. any other part of the country hail from this region. A few of them are Sapindus emarginatus, Withania somnifera, Rauvolfia serpentina etc. Enormous timber plants, medicinal plants and other economically important plants exist in this region as it is an admixture of Asiatic and peninsular Indian elements. Nevertheless, this great diversity and richness of flora is mainly due to its physical geography coupled with varied nature of rainfall, temperature and altitudes. Increasing biotic influences including socio-economic development, unrestricted commercial exploitation of forest wealth have threatened the survival of the genetic resources amounting to a great loss of natural heritage, which is the rule of nature and the vegetation of any place is under constant modification, one type leading to the other. During this gradual process of evolution of flora, it is quite likely that certain species either get eliminated from the area or their ecological niche shrunk, whereby they have to struggle for their existence. Such species may be termed as threatened plants. It is observed that many interesting species are disappeared.

Results and Discussion

Southwest India harbours about 70% of the total flora of India (25,000 species). Besides, a good number of primitive angiosperms not reported from poorly represented in their original localities either due to the disturbances of their habitats or excessive collection. If the current practices of human activities continue, even the unrecorded species of immense value will disappear. It is alarming, because a disappearing species can take with it 10-30 dependent species, such as insects, higher animals and other plants. In the study, 93 medicinal plants encountered belonging to 48 families from the different parts of the study area used by the local people and tribes in their daily ailments from various diseases (Table 1), 31 were trees, 18 shrubs, 26 herbs and 18 were climbers. Different parts of medicinal plant species were used for curing different diseases and mostly leaves were used followed by bark, fruit etc. From this collection, 14 medicinal plants belonging to 12 families are categorized as highly prioritized medicinal plants as they are of immense value in curing various diseases, but are in the low niche. Eventually, these species are now on the freeway towards extinction due to over exploitation, encroachment of habitats for the agricultural urbanization purposes. A few species regarded as endangered such as Rauvolfia serpentina, Withania somnifera and Santalum album that were also encountered.

Toble 1

Table 1-					
Botanical names	Family	Par- tused	Habit	Medicinal use	
Adhatoda zeylanica	Acanthaceae	WP	S	Anthelmintic, Asthama,	
Agave americana	Agavaceae	Rt	S	Anthelmintic	
Achyranthes aspera	Amaranthaceae	L.S.	Н	Whooping cough, Blisters in mouth	
Amaranthus spinosus	Amaranthaceae	WP	S	Expectorant, Laxative	
Alternanthera	Amaranthacaae	WP	Н	Galactagogue	
Alternanthera	Amaranthacaae	WP	Н	Laxative	
Rauvolfia serpentina	Apocynaceae	R	S	Snake bite, scorpion sting, high blood pressure	
Catharanthus roseus	Apocynaceae	L,R	S	Astringent, anti- cancer drug	
Acorous calamus	Araceae	St	Н	Intoxicating	
Aristolochia indica	Aristolochia- ceae	WP	С	Fever, cough, snake bite	
Tylophora indica	Asclepiadaceae	WP	S	Antidysentric	
Leptadenia reticulata	Asclepiadaceae	WP	С	Stimulant	
Hemidesmus indicus	Asclepiadaceae	R	С	Blood purifier,Skin disease	

Journal of Pharmacognosy ISSN: 0976-884X & E-ISSN: 0976-8858, Volume 3, Issue 2, 2012

Table 1-Continue

Botanical names	Family	Par- tused	Habit	Medicinal use
Tridax	Asteraceae	L	Н	Bleeding,scorpion
procumbens				bite,head ache
Basella	Basellaceae	L	С	Antidote
alba varrubra				
Opuntia	Cactaceae	St	S	Stimunt,
dillenii				contraceptive
Cassia fistula	Caesalpiniaceae	L.Fr	Т	Fe-
				ver,cadriacdisease
Cassia tora	Caesalpiniaceae	L	S	Antiparalytic
Saraca asoca	Caesalpiniaceae	L	Т	Inflamma-
				tion,anaemia
Cannabis	Cannabinaceae	L	Н	Digestive problems
Sativa	o :	-	-	D: //
Carica	Caricaceae	F	Т	Digestive
papaya	0.11	-	~	
Cochlosper-	Cochlosperma-	В	С	Hair tonic, cures
mum	ceae			ulcers
religosum Torminalia	Combrotococo	р г	т	Antinumatia laura
Terminalia	Combretaceae	B, F,	Т	Antipyretic, laxa-
bellirica Torminalia	Combrotogooo	рг	т	tive,antiparalutic
Terminalia	Combretaceae	B, F,	Т	Hair growth, cardiac problems
arjuna Torminalia	Combratagooo	ГС	т	
Terminalia catanna	Combretaceae	F, S	Т	Cardiac problem
catappa Terminalia	Combretaceae	Fr	Т	Cold,cough,diabete
chabula	Completaceae	11	I	s,asthma,
Evolvulus	Convolvulaceae	L	н	Cough,cold,fever,as
alsinoides	Junionalaceae	-		thma,jaundice
Momordica	Cucurbitaceae	WP	С	Anthelmitic, antipy-
Charantia	545410140040	•••	J	retic,
Costus	Costaceae	L	Н	Diabe-
speciosus	20000000	-		tes,sterilization
Diospyrous	Ebenaceae	B, L	т	Leucorrohea, car-
melanoxylon		-, -	•	minative
Phyllanthus	Euphorbiaceae	WP	Н	Urinary disorder
acidus				
Phyllanthus	Euphorbiaceae	F	Т	Bleeding nose,
emblica				cough, asthma
Phyllanthus	Euphorbiaceae	WP	Н	Jaundice
niruri				
Jatropha	Euphorbiaceae	S	S	Purgative, anthel-
curcas				mintic
Ricinus	Euphorbiaceae	S	S	Purgative, anthel-
communis				mintic
Saropus	Euphorbiaceae	L	S	Mouth wound, blood
androgynen-				purification
sis				
Leucas	Lamiaceae	L	Н	Laxative, stimulant,
aspera				asthama, dyspep-
				sia, Antiparalytic
Coleus	Lamiaceae	WP	Н	Antiseptic
amboinicus			_	
Ocimum	Lamiaceae	L, F,	S	Stimulant, antispas-
sanctum				modic, diuretic,
				snakebite
Mentha	Lamiaceae	L	Н	Contraceptive,
spicata				indigestion
Ocimum	Lamiaceae	L	S	Sinocytis,kidney
basilicum			-	stone
Careya	Lecythidaceae	B,F	Т	Astringent, demul-
arborea		-		cent, digestive
Asparagrus	Liliaceae	R	Н	Astringent
racemosus	1.12.			Manager
Aloe vera	Liliaceae	L	Н	Memory,stomach
Clarian	Lillenner	01	<u>^</u>	problem
Gloriosa	Liliaceae	St	С	Abortion, rheuma-
				tism,gonorrhoea
superba	Maluana		<u> </u>	
Hibiscus rosa-sinensis	Malvaceae	F, Rt	S	Hair, tonic, jaun- dice, skin disease

Botanical Family Pare Hab Medicinal use Azadirachta Meliaceae Fr.Rt T Antipyretic, smallpox, leprosy, asthma, piles Tinospora Menispermaceae L C Heart disease.leprosy, chronic fever Acaccia Mimosaceae F, L, L Purgative, antibilitis, expectorant Albizzia Mimosaceae B, L T Leprosy, antiphlegmat- ic Adbizzia Mimosaceae B, L T Leprosy, antiphlegmat- ic Adbizzia Mimosaceae B, Rt, T Astingent, anthama, antiphlogistic, purga- tive Ficus Moraceae B, Rt, T Astingent, anthelmitic, cantiphlogistic, purga- tive Ficus Moraceae B, L T Astingent, anthelmitic, cantiphlogistic, purga- tive Syzygium Myrtaceae B, L T Astingent, anthelmitic, cantiphlogistic, purga- tive Syzygium Myrtaceae L, F C Mental illness, liver problem, memorypower Syzygium Nyctaginaceae L, F C Mental illnes, liver problem, memorypower </th <th colspan="7">Table 1-Continue</th>	Table 1-Continue						
Azadirachta indica Meliaceae L Fr.Rt L T Antipyretic, smallpox, leprosy, asthma, piles cordifolia Acacia Menispermaceae L C Heard disease, leprosy, chronic fever Albizzia Mimosaceae F, L, L Purgative, antibeliminic, digestive, antibelius, expectorant Albizzia Mimosaceae B, L T Leprosy, antiphegmat- ic Albizzia Mimosaceae B, L T Leprosy, antiphegmat- ic, antiphologistic Ficus Mimosaceae B, Rt, fri T Astringent, asthama, antiphologistic, purga- tive Ficus Moraceae B T Astringent, antibali- us, leprosy, antibysen- tric, antiphologistic, purga- tive Ficus Moraceae B, L T Astringent, antibali- us, leprosy, antibili- us, leprosy, antibili- us, leprosy, antibili- us, leprosy, antibili- us, leprosy, antibili- us, leprosy Syzygium Myrtaceae B, L T Astringent, anthelminitic, asthma, antibacillus, antiphegmatic, antibili- us, antipsentic, expectorant, diar- mocea Oxalicaceae L, WP H Febrifue, exel, Boils Oxalidaceae L, F C Meestorativ, leprosy, a	Botanical names	Family	Par- tused	Hab- it	Medicinal use		
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Journal of Pharmacognosy ISSN: 0976-884X & E-ISSN: 0976-8858, Volume 3, Issue 2, 2012

Table 1-Continue	
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Botanical names	Family	Par- tused	Hab- it	Medicinal use
Santalum album	Santalaceae	St, Rt	Т	Antipyretic, aphrodisi- ac, antibilius, asthama,
Sapindus Iaurifolia	Sapindaceae	Fr	Т	Purgative, stimulant, expectorant
Cardiosperum halicacabum	Sapindaceae	Rt	С	Diaphoretic, diuretic, aperient
Sapindus emarginatus	Sapindaceae	Fr	Т	Ear ache,snake bite.dandruff
Datura metal	Solanaceae	Rt, S	S	Vulnerary, diarrhea
Withania somnifera	Solanaceae	Rt,L	S	Nervousdisor- der,madness, sleep- lessness
Solanum album	Solanaceae	F	S	Vomiting, tooth ache
Corchorous capsularis	Tiliaceae	L,Rt	S	Antidysentric, digestive
Grewia tiliafolia	Tiliaceae	В	Т	Vulnerary, antiphlegmatic, antipar- alytic, antibilius
Tectona grandis	Verbenaceae	B,RtSt	Т	Antidysentric, asthama, antibilius,
Lantana camara	Verbenaceae	L	S	Vulnerary, rheumatism, vermifuge, diaphoeretic
Vitex negundo	Verbenaceae	L	S	Insecticide, cough, snake bite, cancer
Clerodendrum inerme	Verbenaceae	Rt	S	Rheumatism
Cissus quadrangularis	Vitaceae	St	Н	Asthma, dog bite, insect bite
Ċurcuma longa	Zinziberaceae	St	Н	Cold, Skin disease, Worms
Tribulus terrestris	Zygophyllaceae	Fr	Н	Heart disease, Gastric

Note: L-Leaves, B-Bark, Rt-Root, St-Stem, S-Seeds, F-Flowers, Fr-Fruits H-Herb,S-Shrub, T-Tree, C-Climber, WP-Whole Plant

Conclusion

The survey indicated that, the study area has magnificent plant diversity with plenty of medicinal plants to treat a wide spectrum of human ailments. It is evident from the interviews conducted in different villages; knowledge of medicinal plants is limited to traditional healers, herbalists who are living in rural areas and collecting the medicinal plants from the semi-malnad unscientifically. The investigation concluded that the unscientific collection of ethno-botanical plants from the semi-malnad of Hassan district possess greater pressure on the depeletion of diversity of the local region. Hence, there is an urgent need to assess the biodiversity of the local forest, and conserve the biodiversity as well as the traditional knowledge by proper documentation and conservation strategies.

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