ETHNOMEDICINAL PLANTS USED BY THE TRIBALS IN PACHAMALAI HILLS OF TAMIL NADU, INDIA

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ABSTRACT: An ethnobotanical survey was carried out among the Malayali tribal group in Pachamalai hills of Tamil Nadu, India. The ethnomedicinal information was collected questionnaire with the Malayali traditional healers who have rich in medicinal plant knowledge. During the survey there are 33 species of ethnomedicinal plants were collected. The plants described in the study were mostly used for various diseases like skin diseases, diabetes, fever, cough, allergy and nervous disorders.

KEYWORDS:- Asthma; Cold; Diabetes; Diarrhoea; Fever and Headache

INTRODUCTION

Ethnobotanical study is immense importance with medical science. Now it was well established branch of science with much attention. Globally, about 85% of the traditional medicines used for primary health care are derived from plants. Traditional medicine and ethnobotanical information play an important role in scientific research, particularly when the literature and field work data have been properly evaluated. Earlier studies showed that nearly one third of about 18000 higher plants species are used by the 427 tribal communities. Recently various ethnobotanical studies have been reported to expose the knowledge from the various tribals of Tamil Nadu.

Each and every tribal uses certain plants as medicine. Documenting the indigenous knowledge through ethnobotanical studies is important for the conservation of biological resources as well as their sustainable utilization. It is also necessary to collect the information about the knowledge of traditional medicines, preserved in tribal and rural communities of various parts of India and also Tamil Nadu before it is permanently lost. The herbal medicine is used worldwide from the time immedicable, the medicine was safe and no side –effect and 80% of population depended upon the traditional knowledge of medicine where it has been transmitted orally for the centuries is fast disappearing from the face on the earth. Due to the modern technology to use the bio-chemical reaction and using different part of the plant (Ganasan et al., 2004 and Kamba Raj., 2009)

But still few decant years to grow the using and study of medicinal plant and the whole world to using the traditional knowledge, it become responsibility of the scientific community to unravel the information and document it for availability. Hence the present study has been undertaken to document the

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ethnomedicinal knowledge of Malayali tribal people in Pachamalai hills of Tamil Nadu.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The Pachamalai hills spread over two districts namely Salem and Tiruchirappalli in Tamil Nadu about 75 km away from the Trichy city. The hills are situated in the range of 400-1200 m above the sea level. More than 300 villages are present in the Pachamalai hills which are inhabited by the Malayali tribals. The present study was undertaken in the villages such as Puranadu, Sengatupatti and Thuriyur blocks in Pachamalai hills, located in Tiruchirappalli district of Tamil Nadu, South India. Relevant information on ethnomedicine of the area has been collected from the elderly persons of the tribal community who has rich in ethnomedicinal knowledge.

RESULT

In the present study there were 33 species of ethnomedicinal plants were collected from the Malayali tribals of Pachamalai hills in Tamil Nadu. A brief account of collected ethnomedicinal plants, botanical names, families, local names, mode of preparation and ethnobotanical uses are arranged disease wise and are given below.

Enumeration of Ethnomedicinal Plants

1. Asthma

Solanum trilobatum L. Thoodhuvalai, Solanaceae. Juice of leaves is taken orally for seven days.

Adhatoda zeylanica Medicus.Adathodai, Acanthaceae. Leaf paste is taken orally.

2. Cold

Adhatoda zeylanica Medicus. Adathodai, Acanthaceae. Leaf powder is mixed with water and taken orally in the morning.

Boswellia serrata Roxb. Ex Colebr. Kungiliyam, Burseraceae. Powdered resin is sprayed on burning charcoal and the smoke is inhaled.

Plectranthus coleoides Benth. Omavalli chedi, Lamiaceae. Juice of leaves is taken orally.

Solanum trilobatum L. Thoodhuvalai, Solanaceae. Juice of leaves is taken orally for seven days early in the morning until cure.

Terminalia chebula Retz. Kadukkai maram, Combretaceae. Powdered fruit is mixed with water or cow's or goat's milk and taken internally.

Vitex negundo L. Notchi, Verbenaceae. Fresh leaves are boiled with water and the vapour is inhaled twice a day.

3. Cough

Adhatoda zeylanica Medicus. Adathodai, Acanthaceae. Leaf powder is mixed with water and taken orally in the morning.

Terminalia chebula Retz. Kadukkai maram, Combretaceae. Powdered fruit is mixed with water or cow's or goat's milk and taken internally.

Vitex negundo L. Notchi, Verbenaceae. Fresh leaves are boiled with water and the vapour is inhaled twice a day.

4. Diabetes

Andrographis lineata Wallich exNees. Siriyanangai, Acanthaceae. Leaf powder is mixed with cow's or goat's milk and taken orally.

Costus speciosus (J. Koen.) Smith. Koshtam, Zingiberaceae. Powdered leaves are taken internally with cow's milk.

Gymnema sylvestre (Retz.) R. Br. Ex Roem. &

Schult. Sirukurinjan, Asclepiadaceae. Powdered leaves are mixed with cow's milk and boiled rice, kept overnight and taken internally twice a day.

5. Diarrhoea

Cipadessa baccifera (Roth.) Miq. Pulippan chedi, Meliaceae. Paste of leaves is mixed with cup of water or milk and taken orally.**6.**

Dysentery

Acalypha fruticosa Forsskal. Chinni chedi, Euphorbiaceae. Decoction of leaves is taken orally.

7. Eye infections

Alangium salvifolium (L.f.) Wangerin. Alinji, Alangiaceae. One or two drops of fruit juice are poured into eyes.

8. Fever

Adhatoda zeylanica Medicus. Adathodai, Acanthaceae. Leaf decoction is taken internally twice a day until cure.

Hemidesmus indicus H.f. Nannari, Asclepiadaceae. Decoction of whole plant is taken internally.

Terminalia chebula Retz. Kadukkai maram, Combretaceae. Powdered fruit is mixed with water or cow's or goat's milk and taken internally.

Vitex negundo L. Notchi, Verbenaceae. Fresh leaves are boiled with water and the vapour is inhaled twice a day.

9. Headache

Ceropegia candelabrum L. Perun kodi, Asclepiadaceae. Paste of leaves is applied on forehead.

Pergularia daemia (Fors.) Chiov. Veli parutthi, Asclepiadaceae. Fresh leaves are boiled with water and the vapour is inhaled.

Vitex negundo L. Notchi, Verbenaceae. Fresh leaves are boiled with water and the vapour is inhaled twice a day.

10. Heel cracks

Asparagus racemosus Willd. Thanneer vittankilangu, Liliaceae. Paste of tender and mature leaves is applied topically on the heels before going to bed.

Drymaria cordata (L.) Roem. & Schult. Kodicharai, Caryophyllaceae. Paste of leaves is applied over the heels before going to bed until cure.

Rubia cordifolia L. Kalutharupan chedi, Rubiaceae. Root paste is applied topically on heel before going to bed.

11. Jaundice

Centella asiatica (L.) Urban. Vallarai, Apiaceae. Juice of leaf is mixed with equal amount of goat's milk and taken orally for seven days.

12. Menorrhagia

Hemidesmus indicus H.f. Nannari ,Asclepiadaceae. Paste of root is mixed with water or cow's milk and taken internally twice a day.

13. Nervous disorders

Bischofia javanica Blume. Romaviruksha pattai Bischofiaceae Paste of stem bark is applied externally on the affected places.

14. Stomach

Spermacoce hispida Nathaichuri, Rubiaceae. Seeds are crushed into paste and taken orally to get relief from stomach-ache.

15. Snakes bites

Abrus precatorius, Kundumani, Fabaceae. Root Powder is taken orally along with cow's milk to treat scorption sting and snakes bite.

16. Skin disease

Sphaeranthus indicus Kottai, Asteraceae. Leaf, flower and seeds ground into paste and applied topically to treat skin diseases.

17. Urinary

Tribulus terrestris Nerunchimul, Zygophyllaceae. Fruit and root are mixed with water and boiled and taken orally to prevent white discharge in women and to treat urinary troubles.

18. Vomiting

Murraya koenigii Karuveppilai, Rutaceae. Leaf juice is taken orally to arrest vomiting.

SUMMARY

The present investigation reported that the present healers are the final generation of traditional healers from the Pachamalli hills. Tribals populations are having high knowledge in medicinal plants and their usage for appropriate methods. The Traditional healers are experienced in diagnostics method through natural way like physical appearance, excreatory substances like urine, sweat and faeces then head ache etc. because they don't have high equipments in their sub-sub rural areas..It is necessary to document the medicinal plants available in the forests with the help of traditional healers before the healers' knowledge is disappeared. The traditional medicine was optional to form the basic pharmaceutical drug to treat the diseases (Santhya et al.2006). Patchamallai hills having lots of medicinal plants but we are not fully aware of that. Our enthusiastic methods identified and used more than 33 plants and their medicinal cum socioeconomic value. Proper documentation of these

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