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Ethnomedicinal study of some wild herbs of Nawhata block of Saharsa district

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Abstract : Altogether 18 wild herbs were identified for different diseases. Out of 18 plants both *Tinospora* and *Boerhaavia* were informed to be suitable for Jaundice, for skin diseases *Argemone* and *Achyranthus* are being used by different informants. Similarly for urinary disorders both *Achyranthus* and *Sida* are being used.

Key words: Ethnobotany, informants, jaundice

INTRODUCTION

Ethnobotany is the direct inter relationship between plants and human. Man has been using flora and fauna since ancient time. He gained the knowledge of useful and harmful plants. This knowledge became an integral part of his culture.

In Rig Veda and Athar Veda there is mention of use of plants. Charak samhita is an old literature in which medicinal use of several plants is mentioned.

Some wild plant resources are severely threatened by habitat loss and species selective overexploitation. In addition indigenous knowledge about the use of plant resources is rapidly disappearing from traditional communities. In the context of conservation and sustainable use of plants resources can contribute to the scientific base for management decisions.

Today ethnobotany plays a crucial role in the study of traditional medicine as it has an interfacial function

linking nature with culture and traditional knowledge with modern technology. The main aim of ethnobotany is to document the knowledge about plants that have come through generations and use the knowledge for the benefit of society. The ethnic communities have significant customary knowledge on utilization of plant and there is a long tradition of transferring this indigenous knowledge from generation to generation.

MATERIAL & METHODS

A survey was conducted in four villages, Bakaunia, Ashnahi patti, Chandrain and Baksaur from 2013 to 2014 at regular intervals. People of this area were consulted. People of different group were selected as informants. Included informants were both males and females. Questioners were asked to all informants about-

- Local name of the wild herbs to which the use for medicinal purpose and for other economic values.
- How they use the herb or part of the herb.

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- (c) If the herb is of medicinal value what part which aliment.
- (d) Flowering and fruiting season of the herb.
- (e) Season of the herb to which they use.
- (f) How they knew the property of the particular herb?

Their knowledge regarding medicinal use of herb for application in different ailments was asked. All together 50 informants were interviewed.

RESULT

Altogether 18 herbs were recognized for their medicinal value. Herbs were collected, identified and herbariums were prepared. The herbs were described and their medicinal value noted.

1. *Tinospora cordifolia*

Therapeutics

It is a tonic, ant periodic, diuretic, cures fever, Jaundice, diabetes, piles and respiratory disorders.

2. *Argemone mexicana L.*

Therapeutics

Ant parasitic drug is obtained from *Argemone mexicana*. Its root is used in skin diseases. It is also suitable in the treatment of syphilis and Piles. Seeds are used diarrhoea and dysentery.

3. *Gynandropsis pentaphylla*

Therapeutics

Tilaparni or Suryavarta is used in scorpion sting and snake bite. Ether extract of plants is anticancer and spasmolytic.

Decoction of roots is used in fever. Juice of leaves and seeds oil used to cure skin diseases. Leaves are vesicant in rheumatism; remedy for muscular pain, headache and intestinal wounds.

Seeds are antispasmodic, sudorific, anthelmintic and carminative. They are applied as poultice to sores having maggots and given as infusion for cough. Powder of seeds is a good remedy for piles.

4. *Sida cordifolia L.*

Therapeutics

Juice of root is used for healing wounds Infusion of root is given in nervous and urinary diseases and disorders of blood and bile. Seeds are given in gonorrhoea, useful in neurological disorders.

5. *Acalypha indica (Willd.) L.*

Therapeutics

The plants is bitter, acrid and possesses diuretic, cathartic, expectorant, emetic, anthelmintic, anodyne and hypnotic properties. But it causes gastro-intestinal irritation. It is used as a substitute for ipecac and Senegal. A decoction of the herb is used as a cure for tooth and ear ache and is safe and speedy laxative. It is useful in bronchitis, pneumonia and asthma. Root is cathartic.

Leaves are laxative, used in scabies and in snake bite. Fresh leaf juice is useful in rheumatoid arthritis and skin affections. Juice with salt applied on eczema.

Paste of leaves applied on burns; with juice of lime, useful in early cases of ringworms. Powder of leaf is used in bed-sore and maggot infested wounds. Extract found useful in cardinal symptoms of whooping cough; the raised eosinophil count also came down to normal.

6. *Euphorbia hirta L.*

Therapeutics

It is demulcent, antispasmodic, anti-asthmatic pectoral, anthelmintic. Extract of plant is effective in cardiovascular disorders. Plant juice is recommended for dysentery. *Euphorbia hirta* have an alkaloid which is effective in respiratory disorders. Milky latex is present in plant which is a cure for diseases of urino-genital tract.

7. *Phyllanthus niruri L.*

Therapeutics

Bhudhatri or Bhumyamalaki is effective in gonorrhoea. Herb is bitter, astringent, diuretic, febrifuge and antiseptic. Fresh root is a remedy for jaundice. Milky juice of plant is applied in sore. Powdered leaves along with rice water are a remedy for ulcer. Lives are applied in fever and young shoots in dysentery.

8. *Boerhaavia diffusa*

Therapeutics

Whole plant is used for the medicinal purpose. Fresh juice of root is applied in eyes for conjunctivitis. Paste of root is applied on wounds. It boosts up the filtration and renal functions.

9. *Achyranthes aspera*

Therapeutics

It cures ascites, enlargement of cervical glands & piles. It is used in dropsy and urinary diseases, skin eruptions, Colic and snake bite. Decoction of herb is useful in Pneumonia, cough and Kidney stone. Root is given in stomach pain.

10. *Amaranthus spinosus*

Therapeutics

Used for strengthening uterus and ameliorating its pain. It is also used against burning sensation, dyspepsia and fever. Decoction of root is used in gonorrhoea.

11. *Centella asiatica*

Therapeutics

It is nervine and Cardio-tonic. It maintains youthful vigour and strength useful in dermatosis, anaemia, diabetes and cough. It is useful in skin diseases.

12. *Ageratum conyzoides*

Therapeutics

Juice of leaves boiled with oil is externally used in rheumatism. Decoction of leaves recommended in diarrhoea and dysentery.

13. *Vernonia cinerea*

Therapeutics

It purifies blood, bite and semen. It is used for leucorrhoea and excessive bleeding. Used in chronic skin diseases, bladder stones piles, worms and Haematological disorders.

14. *Leucas aspera*

Therapeutics

It is a reputed remedy for worms, fever and intestinal catarrh in children. It is antipyretic, antiseptic, carminative. Used in Jaundices, respiratory and skin diseases Leaves are considered useful in chronic rheumatism.

15. *Ocimum americanum*

Therapeutics

It possesses aromatic, carminative, diaphoretic and stimulant properties. Decoction is used for cough, that of leaf for dysentery. It is also used as mouth wash for toothache.

16. *Chenopodium album*

Therapeutics

It is laxative, blood purifier, Anthelmintic. Leaves used for intestinal ulcers and considered useful in piles, throat and eye troubles. Flowers and buds are used in stomach troubles. Seeds are prescribed for hepatic disorders.

17. *Hygrophila spinosa*

Therapeutics

It is a reputed remedy for Arthritis. It promotes strength and appetite. It cures oedema, ascites, bladder stone eye diseases and dysentery.

18. *Rungia repens*

Therapeutics

It is used as diuretic vermifuge which is given in snake bite. Fresh leaves bruised and mixed with Caster oil are applied to scalp in cases of *Tinea capitis*.

CONCLUSION

A survey was conducted in four villages, Bakaunia, Ashnahi patti, Chandrain and Baksaur from 2013 to 2014 at regular intervals. People of this area were consulted. People of different group were selected as informants. Included informants were both males and females.

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