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Ethnomedicinal plants of Kosi area used in Homeopathic medicine

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Abstract: Koshi Region is primarily a rural area with a considerable amount of people relying on traditional methods to sustain lives. Thus, people from the region depend on a variety of homeopathic medicines, treatments and diagnosis to tackle health ailments. Homeopathy was started in India during the early 1800s by a few German scientists in Bengal, not very far from the Koshi Region. Our study was aimed at identifying various medicinal plants used in homeopathic treatment and medicine. Ethnobotanical study helps in the documentation of such knowledge. The sub branch of botany helps us understand local practices and traditions in relation to flora of the region. In ethnomedicinal studies, sometimes one plant has multiple use benefits and at other times, different plants are utilised in the treatment of a particular ailment. In this field of study, plants are documented according to their medicinal value and this serves as a database for not only future studies and experiments but also in the preservation of local culture and traditions. In this study, a survey was made in 15 villages of different blocks of Kosi division. 21 plant species belonging to 16 families used in Homeopathic medicines are described in present study along with their scientific name, family, local name and medicinal use in Homeopathy.

Key words: Homeopathy, Medicinal plants, Kosi area.

INTRODUCTION

Homeopathy is one of the alternative systems of medicine having a well documented pharmacopoeia. In India, Homeopathic treatment started as early as 1810 when some German physicians come to Bengal and started distributing Homeopathic remedies.

Dr. John Martin Honigberger and Hahnemann brought Homeopathy in India. Dr. Honigberger arrived at Lahore in 1829-30, later on went to Calcutta and started practice there.

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In India, Homeopathy is considered as part of the Indian traditional medicine. About 15% Indians are using Homeopathic treatment. This system of medicine relies mainly on plants and minerals as drug.

According to the principle of Homeopathy serial dilution of plant extract or mineral in solvent removes toxic effects while the quality of the substance retained by the diluents. The end product is so diluted that it is indistinguishable from solvent.

Homeopath select treatments according to a patient consultation that explores the physical and psychological state of the patient, both of which are considered important in selecting remedy.

MATERIAL AND METHOD

The use of sophisticated equipments and accepted scientific parameters have become common in ethnobotanical studies but the essence of ethnobotanical study is in the detailed study of the local and indigenous culture, traditions and practices and relating them to observed flora of the region. Our study has used preliminary survey to collect traditional knowledge and specimens of medicinal flora used for homeopathy in the region along with the use of an internationally recognised homeopathic manual to gauge medicinal values of collected specimen.

15 villages of different blocks of Kosi division were visited. Medicinal plants were collected and their local names and medicinal importance were acknowledged from local

informants. Collected plants were brought to the laboratory and identified. Homeopaths of local area were consulted and asked for the use of these plants in Homeopathic drugs. Medicinal values of collected plant specimens were also identified with the help of “New Manual of Homeopathic Materia medica and Repertory”. Herbariums were prepared from collected plant specimens.

RESULT

Altogether 21 plants belonging to 16 families were recognized which are used in Homeopathic medicines for different diseases. Scientific name, local name, family and name of diseases for which the plant extract is used in Homeopathy are recorded in Table no. 01.

Table No. 01

Sl. No.	Scientific Name of Plant	Local Name	Family	Medicine Name	Uses in Homeopathy
1.	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Chirchiri	Acanthaceae	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Diarrhoea, Dysentery, Diuretic, Menorrhagia, Astringent, bad effects of dog and snake bite.
2.	<i>Adhatoda zeylancia</i>	Vasaka	Acanthaceae	<i>Justica adhatoda</i>	Headache and Respiratory disorder.
3.	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Beel	Rutaceae	<i>Aegle folia</i>	Bleeding pills, Diarrhoea, Dysentery, Fever with dropsy and Impotence.
4.	<i>Allium cepa</i>	Piyaz	Liliaceae	<i>Allium cepa</i>	Cough and Cold, Injury, Nasal polypus, Diarrhoea, Influenza, Throat affection.
5.	<i>Allium sativum</i>	Lahsum	Liliaceae	<i>Allium sativum</i>	Stomach, Head, Respiratory affection.
6.	<i>Aloe-vera</i>	Ghrit kumari	Liliaceae	<i>Aloe socotrina</i>	Abdominal disorders, Anal infection, Colic, Constipation, Cough, Dysentery, Diarrhoea, Haemorrhoids skin affection.
7.	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Neem	Meliaceae	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Eczema, Fever and Stomachache, Scabis, Leprosy, Helminthiasis, Gonorrhoea, Glossitis.
8.	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i>	Aak	Asclepiadaceae	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i>	Toothache, Elephantiasis, Purging, Vomiting.
9.	<i>Cannbis sativa</i>	Bhang	Cannabaceae	<i>Cannabis sativa</i>	Constipation, Respiratory disorders, Urinary affection, Gonorrhoea.
10.	<i>Centella asiatica</i>	Brahmi	Apiaceae	<i>Hydrocotyle asiatica</i>	Acne, Eczema, Uterus affection, Elephantiasis, Leprosy.
11.	<i>Citrus vulgaris</i>	Tab	Rutaceae	<i>Citrus vulgaris</i>	Headache with Nausea, Vomiting and Vertigo, Thoracic oppression.
12.	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	Dub	Poaceae	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i>	Haemorrhage, Dysentery, Dropsy, Leucorrhoea, Scabies.
13.	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	Bargad	Moraceae	<i>Ficus indica</i>	Headache, Respiratory disorder.
14.	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	Peepal	Moraceae	<i>Ficus religiosa</i>	Headache, Respiratory disorders, Monorrhagia.
15.	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	Tulsi	Labiatae	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i>	Asthma, Tonsillitis, Cold, Ophthalmia, Neonatum, Typhoid, Worm affection.
16.	<i>Ricinus communis</i>	Arand	Euphorbiaceae	<i>Ricinus communis</i>	Remedy of digestive system, Nausea, Profuse vomiting, Constipation and Diarrhoea.

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17.	<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Makoi	Solanaceae	<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Head, Eye, Nose, Respiratory, Fever, Skin and Stomach.
18.	<i>Tinospora cardifolia</i>	Guruch latti	Menispermaceae	<i>Tinospora cardifolia</i>	Seminal debility, Fever, Jaundice, Splenic affection, Leprosy, Leucorrhoea, Rheumatism, Gonorrhoea.
19.	<i>Syzygium cumini</i>	Jamun	Myretaceae	<i>Syzygium jambolanum</i>	Diabetes mellitus and Ulcer.
20.	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>	Haritiki	Combretaceae	<i>Terminalia chebula</i>	Bleeding, Pile, Diarrhoea, Chronic dysentery, Constipation, Biliary colic, Glossitis, Headache, Vertigo, Dropsy, Skin disorder.
21.	<i>Viola odorata</i>	Banfasan	Violaceae	<i>Viola odorata</i>	Head, Eye, Ear, Urinary and Respiratory disorder.

CONCLUSION

The present study revealed that Kosi area is rich in medicinal flora. Several of them are also used in Homeopathic medicine. In present study 21 plants belonging to 16 families were recorded which are used in Homeopathic drugs.

Unfortunately rapidly increasing urbanization of the area poses threat to this medicinal flora. Therefore scientific cultivation and conservation of these medicinal floras is needed. A point needs to be made on the waning patronage of Homeopathy with development. A revival of Homeopathic treatment needs to be done. The newer generation is slowly decreasing their reliance on homeopathic and other such forms of traditional medicinal sciences. Therefore, a study like this showing the interaction of Botany and Homeopathy is an important addition to prove the relevance of this science of treatment and medicine.

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