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INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE OF SANTHAL TRIBES OF DALMA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY, JHARKHAND, INDIA

History

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ABSTRACT

Medicinal plants offer alternative remedies with tremendous opportunities. They not only provide access and affordable medicine to poor people; they can also generate income, employment and foreign exchange for developing countries. Many traditional healing herbs and plant parts have been shown to have medicinal value, especially in the rural areas and that these can be used to prevent, alleviate or cure several human diseases. In the present floristic survey, it was observed that primitive tribal's use medicinal plant parts for treatment of different ailments. A total of 417 plants were recorded in the study area, this paper provides data on 30 medicinal plants belongs to 19 families used by the Santhal tribal communities living in and around the Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary.

KEYWORDS

Indigenous knowledge, Santhal, Sanctuary

INTRODUCTION:

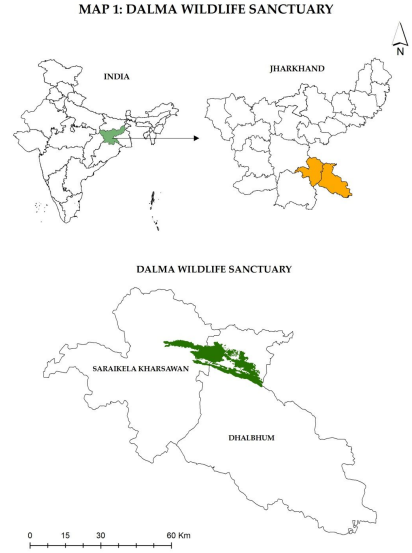
Interest in the utilization of medicinal and aromatic plants as pharmaceuticals, herbal remedies, flavourings, perfumes and cosmetics, and other natural products has greatly increased in the recent years. As with many other economic plants that are still being collected from the wild and used by humans unsustainably, threats to genetic diversity and species survival have also increased in the case of medicinal plants as a result of habitat destruction, over-exploitation, land use changes and other pressures. The medicinal plants have been used by humans from the pre-historical times. Studies have pointed out that many drugs that are used in commerce have come from folk-use and use of plants by indigenous cultures. Traditional medicine incorporates several well organized, distinct systems of diagnosis and cure. In India alone, three traditional systems of medicine, namely Ayurveda, Siddha and Unani are distinguished. India is tenth among the plant–rich countries of the world, fourth among the Asian countries. Moreover, India is also one among the 12 mega biodiversity centers of the world by having 47,000 plants species. The village elders, farmers and tribal have tremendous knowledge since thousands of years about the medicinal plants for health reason. There are 461 tribal groups in India out of which 75 groups were classified as PTG (Primitive tribal groups) living in different ecological zones. The indigenous people of the Chotanagpur Plateau are essentially tribes and include Ho, Santhal, Oraon, Kharia, Munda, Bhumij, Lohra and Parhaiya. Most of them engaged in agriculture, cultivate rice and vegetables besides collection of forest produce. Tribal groups inhabit near the mineral-rich areas are often seen engaged as workers in forests/factories/mines. They were nature-worshippers before converting to more institutionalized religions like Christianity and Hinduism. There are 29 tribal settlements within the Sanctuary, with a population of about 9,785 individuals. More than 70% of the total population of the state is exclusively dependent on the herbs and traditional healers for maintaining a reasonable level of health. The state is rich in biodiversity of medicinal plants and their traditional uses. All the tribal groups cited above live in the sanctuary. The present study was carried out on the indigenous practices of Santhal, a primitive tribal group concentrated in the Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary, Jamshedpur was carried out.

MATERIAL & METHODS:

Study Area

Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary is situated on the Chota Nagpur plateau of south Jharkhand near the steel city of Jamshedpur. It lies between 22°04' 30" to 22° 57" N and 86°03'15" to 86°26'30" E. It spreads in East Singhbhum and Saraikela districts of the state. Its eastern limit extends up to the border of Purulia district of West Bengal (Map 1). It spreads in East Singhbhum and Saraikela districts of the state. Its eastern limit extends up to the border of Purulia district of West Bengal. It covers an area of about 193.22 km^2 (Reserved forest 45.56 km^2; Protected forest 147.44 km^2).

MAP 1: DALMA WILDLIFE SANCTUARY



The present study is based on the data collected on indigenous knowledge among Santhal triblas of Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary during 2013. Detailed interviews were conducted with natural healer of kankadasa village. Local Healer shared his valuable information about the medicinal values of 30 different plants in treating different ailments. They usually collects different medicinal plants in and around sanctuary and make them into different formulations (paste, decoctions and powders etc.) then use those formulations to treat particular ailment in appropriate dosages.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

The present study includes 30 taxa representing 30 genera of 19 families of angiosperms were recorded in Dalma Wildlife Sanctuary. The Santhal tribal in this region use a wide range of herbal medicines for different ailments like, stomach disorders, headaches, cough, cold and bronchitis, bone fractures, pain, swelling and bodyaches and blisters and Ulcers. The knowledge of these medicinal plants was learned from their fore fathers from generation to generation. Among the 30 plants, 8 plants belongs to herbs, 8 shrubs, 2 under shrubs, 5 climbers, 1 twiner and 6 trees Table 1. Medicinal plants distributed in the wildlife sanctuary are categorized below based on their medicinal properties and utility at local level.

Table 1:

S.No	Family	Botanical Name	Local Name	Disease
1.	Rutaceae	*Aegle marmelos* (L.) Corrêa	Bel	Stomach Disorders
2.	Acanthaceae	*Andrographis paniculata* (Burm.f.) Nees	Kalmeg	
3.	Scrophulariaceae	*Buddleja asiatica* Lour.	Ninda	
4.	Fabaceae	*Cajanus scarabaeoides* (L.) Thouars	Bir Horee	
5.	Caesalpiniaceae	*Cassia fistula* L.	Mirju baha	
6.	Celastraceae	*Cassine glauca* (Rottb.) Kuntze	Jamragi	
7.	Celastraceae	*Celastrus paniculatus* Willd.	Kujri	
8.	Menispermaceae	*Cissampelos pareira* L.	Tejomela	
9.	Verbenaceae	*Clerodendrum cordatum* D.Don	Bhant	
10.	Euphorbiaceae	*Croton persimilis* Müll.Arg	Gote	
11.	Fabaceae	*Desmodium motorium* (Houtt.) Merr.	Dudli	
12.	Fabaceae	*Flemingia strobilifera* (L.) W.T.Aiton	Simbusak	
13.	Apocynaceae	*Holarrhena pubescens* Wall. ex G.Don	Kurchi	
14.	Acanthaceae	*Nelsonia canescens* (Lam.) Spreng.	Badarasna	
15.	Amaranthaceae	*Achyranthes aspera* L.	Chirchira	Headache
16.	Gentianaceae	*Canscora diffusa* (Vahl) R.Br. ex Roem. & Schult.	Sankhaphuli	
17.	Verbenaceae	*Clerodendrum infortunatum* L.	Bhant	
18.	Fabaceae	*Phyllodium pulchellum* (L.) Desv.	Jatsalpan	
19.	Fabaceae	*Abrus precatorius* L.	Kawet	Cough, Cold and Bronchitis
20.	Amaranthaceae	*Achyranthes aspera* L.	Chirchira	
21.	Acanthaceae	*Justicia adhatoda* L.	Arusha	
22.	Rubiaceae	*Gardenia gummifera* L.f.	Dururi	Bone fractures
23.	Orchidaceae	*Vanda tessellata* (Roxb.) Hook. ex G.Don	Banda	
24.	Orchidaceae	*Viscum articulatum* Burm. f.	Katkom	
25.	Rubiaceae	*Spermacoce articularis* L.f.	Guthari	Pain, Swelling and Bodyaches
26.	Sapindaceae	*Cardiospermum halicacabum* L.	Kamphutki	
27.	Verbenaceae	*Vitex negundo* L.	Shivari	
28.	Fabaceae	*Abrus precatorius* L.	Kawet	Blood purifier
29.	Combretaceae	*Combretum album* Pers.	Aten	
30.	Papaveraceae	*Argemone mexicana* L.	Gokhula	Blisteres and Ulcers
31.	Capparaceae	*Capparis zeylanica* L.	Ardanda	
32.	Fabaceae	*Mucuna pruriens* (L.) DC.	Alkusi	

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