

Ethnobotanical Knowledge of Mannan Tribe in Selected Region of Kovilmala, Idukki District

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Abstract:- The present investigation aims to document the conventional botanical knowledge of the Mannan tribe settled in the selected region of Kovilmala of Idukki district of Kerala state. The study has brought forward the diverse medicinal uses of 17 medicinal plant species belonging to 15 angiosperm families. The document of this information will be vital in future for sustainable utilization and conservation. Further studies are however needed for the therapeutic validation of the documented traditional botanical knowledge of the Mannan tribe.

Keywords:- Conventional Botanical Knowledge, Mannan Tribe, Ethnobotany, Idukki.

I. INTRODUCTION

India has a magnificent tradition of the arts and science of relieving. The origin of Indian medicine is enveloped in myths. But Ayurveda make an appearance from folk medicine for at least 2,000 years ago with its well-developed recorded system and practices. Over 20,000 plant drug formulations are listed in Ayurvedic pharmacopoeia and nearly 60,000 are believed to be in existence in the tribal knowledge and practices^[8].

Around 60% of the world population and some 80 % of the population in the developing countries rely on traditional medicine mostly the drugs of plant origin for their primary healthcare^[11]. It is believed that today nearly 64-70% of the total global population depends on medicinal plants to satisfy most of their health care needs, current dependence on traditional medicinal system remains high^{[4][3]}.

India has a rich variety of over 500 tribal and aboriginal communities living in remote places in close association of forest since time immemorial. They have acquired plenty of knowledge about the plants and their uses to meet their day to day needs and health care^{[2][7][5]}.

In the present study, an attempt has been made to document the conventional botanical knowledge of the Mannan tribe of a selected region of Kovilmala tribal

settlement of Idukki district. The mannan group is special by their inherent customs and heritage. They are found in Adimali, Kattappana and Nedumkandam. About 24 Mannan tribal settlements are there in Idukki district^[9].

The chief of the Mannan tribe is known as King who is mentioned to as Raja Mannan. The lesser king, 'ilayaraja' divides equal power with the king. Only tribal communities of India own their kings (Adivasi Rajas), one in Tripura and other in the Kovilmala region of Idukki district Kerala.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

A. The Study Area

The study area drops in the Kovilmala region of Idukki district of Kerala state of India between 9°42'16.343''N latitude and 77°2'23.988''E longitude. The area houses some of about 800 acres and is surrounded by the river Periyar which flows in the westerly direction from the north and to the east by the reservoir of Idukki dam.

Traditionally they were cultivating paddy, ragi and tena (the Italian millet). The crops being cultivated nowadays are tapioca followed by cardamom, banana, pepper, cocoa, coffee and tea.

B. Methodology

The present study was done with the consent from the ilayaraja "Achan Chakkan" who lead us with samples of plant materials. Native knowledge on medicinal plants with regard to their local names and the illness or diseases healed by these plants were noted through participant survey employing ethnobotanical field interview process. The specimens were photographed and collected and identified using suitable floras and standard literature^[10].

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Mannan tribes of Kovilmala are conscious of the therapeutic uses of many medicinal plant species included in angiosperm families^[1]. From that 17 medicinal plant species from 15 angiosperm families had been collected. (Table 1) (Figures 1 – 6).

BINOMIAL NAME	FAMILY	LOCAL NAME	APPLICATION
<i>Ocimum sanctum L.</i>	Lamiaceae	Krishna thulasi	Cough, eyes, nose, throat problems, cold
<i>Centella asiatica(L.) Urban</i>	Apiaceae	Kudangal	Stomach disorders
<i>Leucas aspera</i>	Lamiaceae	Thumba	Cold
<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Solanaceae	Kuttithakkali	Tonsil, pneumonia, diabetes
<i>Curculigo orchioides Gaertn.</i>	Amoryllidaceae	Nilappana	Cough, jaundice
<i>Ruta graveolens L. var. angustifolia Hook.f.</i>	Rutaceae	Arutha	Cold, cough, breathing problems
<i>Emilia sonchifolia(L.) DC.</i>	Asteraceae	Muyalchevian	Tonsil
<i>Hemigraphis colorata</i>	Acanthaceae	Murikootti	Wound
<i>Scoparia dulcis L.</i>	Scrophulariaceae	Kallurukki	Kidney stone
<i>Aloe vera</i>	Liliaceae	Kattarvazha	Hair, skin
<i>Wrightia tinctoria.(Roxb.)R.Br</i>	Apocynaceae	Dhandhappala	Toothache, skin problems
<i>Ipomoea obscura</i>	Convolvulaceae	Thiruthali	Dysentery
<i>Ocimum kilmandsharium gurke</i>	Lamiaceae	Karpoora thulasi	Cold, cough
<i>Gymnema sylvestre R.Br</i>	Asclepiadaceae	Chakkarakkolli	Diabetes
<i>Azadirachta indica A .Juss.</i>	Meliaceae	Aryaveppu	Antiseptic uses
<i>Ficus racemosa L.</i>	Moraceae	Athi	Diarrhoea
<i>Phyllanthus niruri L.</i>	Euphorbiaceae	Keezharnelli	Jaundice

Table 1: Some plants used by the Mannan community

Figures shows some of medicinal plants used by Mannan tribes in Kovilmala



Fig 1:- Emilia sonchifolia



Fig 3:- Solanum nigrum



Fig 2:- Gymnema sylvestre



Fig 4:- Hemigraphis colorata



Fig 5:- Aloe vera



Fig 6:- Ruta graveolens

IV. CONCLUSION

The data collected directly from the tribal people of the study area. The tribes have a well-developed system of traditional medicine. They know about a number of unfamiliar medicinal plants and their applications. They do not disclose the knowledge to others because of the fear that, if they did so, the curative power of the plant may be lost. Another problem facing is the absence of documented data. A lot of primitive knowledge has been lost by the absence of supportive written works. A large number of medicinal plants are being endangered due to urbanisation and deforestation^[6]. In these situations ethnobotanical and ethnomedicinal studies have great importance in the collection of conventional knowledge, construction of recorded data and in the protection of endangered medicinal plant species^[12].

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