



ISSN Print: 2394-7500
ISSN Online: 2394-5869
IJAR 2015; 1(6): 101-103
www.allresearchjournal.com
Received: 09-03-2015
Accepted: 10-04-2015

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Plant species of *cassia* (sub- family Caesalpinaceae) used as herbal medicine in Bhavnagar area, Gujarat, India

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Abstract

The present paper deals with to collect information regarding traditional knowledge of the *Cassia sp.* in different areas of Bhavnagar district, Gujarat. This study reveals that people of this region uses local medicinal plants for curing their common diseases. The knowledge regarding sources and use of local plants by the villagers was collected and compiled. 11 species of *Cassia sp.* are being identified, its part and various form of uses as herbal medicine are presented.

Keywords: Cassia, Herbal Medicine, Bhavnagar.

1. Introduction

Medicinal plants - drug yielding plants have been used since ancient times for the treatment of human ailments. In India the Sacred Vedas dating back between 3500 BC and 800 BC give many references of medicinal plants ^[1, 5]. Indigenous people throughout the world possess knowledge of their surrounding flora and fauna. Use of various parts of herbs, shrubs and trees as a medicine is known to man since time immemorial ^[10]. Herbal medicines have been practiced by all human culture. The indigenous medicinal practices have been the subject of attention since time immemorial. The folk medicinal traditions play reflective and prominent role in human and environment interaction Chopra *et al.*, 1956, ^[11, 13]. Consequently it become the store house of knowledge of many useful as well as harmful plants accumulated and enriched through generations and passed on from one to another generation without any type of written record. Indigenous knowledge existing with old aged persons living in remote villages needs to be taped by systematic documentation and making the people aware about the rare medicinal plants ^[6]. Due to unorganized use i.e. exploitation and rapid industrialization this precious plant wealth is rapidly depleting in the study area. The present work is an attempt to identify the important plant species with their local names, part used and type of use earlier. ^[2, 7, 8, 15] and many workers are working either at universities or at research laboratories of CSIR

2. Study area

Bhavnagar is located in the west of gulf of khambhat and It is fifth largest city of Gujarat state located between 21°28' N 72°05' E to 21°46'N 72°09'E. Bhavnagar has a semi-arid climate, dry summers from March to mid-June, the wet monsoon season from mid-June to October where the city receives around 550 mm of rain on average. The semiarid classification is due to the city's high evapotranspiration the months from November to February are mild, the average temperature being around 20 °C, with low humidity. Due to proximity to the sea, the climate remains a bit humid throughout the year ^[12].

3. Methodology

The present study is the outcome of critical, minute and systematic study of the plants and their usages by the local inhabitant of the district. A large number of rural persons were interviewed to gather the ethnomedicinal information. The data presented here are based on personal interviews with informants like medicine- man, local healers, farmers, village headmen and old experienced men & women. During the field work, voucher specimens of each ethno medicinal

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important plant were collected [3]. The information was recorded on a questionnaire based on Jain (1995) and in the field note book [9, 17].

4. Result & Discussion

Total eleven (11) plants species of *Cassia sp.* of the sub-family Caesalpiniaceae identified [4, 14, 16] and recorded of folk medicinal value in the study area. The ethno medicinal survey of the study area indicates that the local people use these plants

for noncommercial purpose only. However, for majority of the species, various plant parts are the source of raw material for medicines. Further, there is no standardization of the dose of the active principle and most of the doses are given on experience basis. It may therefore, concluded that the wise use of these plant species on sustainable basis for folk medicine need agronomic and biochemical investigation. I also mention here to uses of plant part and dose of medicine under medical supervision.

Table 1: Enumeration of plant species of the study area with their botanical names, part used Form of use and uses.

No	Plant Name	Part used	Form of use	Use in / as
1	<i>Cassia absus</i> L. (CHIMED)	Leaf	Powder	Anaemia, diarrhoea, nasitis, cough, asthma and hic cough
		Seeds	Powder, Poultis	Conjunctivitis, dysopia, ophthalmia and cataract
			Powder with ginger, black pepper, salt	Indigestion and stomachache
		Root	Paste	Wounds, sores of penis and ringworms
No	Plant Name	Part used	Form of use	Use in / as
2	<i>Cassia angustifolia</i> Vahl. (SON MAKKAJ)	Plant	Powder	Constipation, loss of appetite, indigestion, skin diseases, malaria, jaundice and anemia.
No	Plant Name	Part used	Form of use	Use in / as
3	<i>Cassia auriculata</i> L. (AWAL)	Bark	Juice	dropped on eye pains
			Decoction	diarrhoea, dysentery, diabetes and is used as gargles
		Root	Decoction	hydrocele, cholera, indigestion, vomiting and fever
		Seed	Poultis	Eye disease
			Powder	diabetes, ophthalmia, dysentery, diarrhoea, swellings, abdominal disorders, leprosy, skin disease,
		Flower	Decoction	stomach infections, to check excessive menstrual flow and leucorrhoea, diabetes, calculi, uretrorrhoea
			Gulkand	leucorrhoea, burning micturiation and calculi
		Twig		tooth brush
		Bark, Leaf, flowers and young pods		to colour leather
		Leaf	Paste	boils, swellings, rheumatism, ulcers, ringworms and leprosy and skin diseases
			Boil In milk and tied on eye	Eye pain
		Plant		Food Fodder and Fibre
No	Plant Name	Part used	Form of use	Use in / as
4	<i>Cassia fistula</i> L. (GARMALO)	Bark		boils, pustules, leprosy, ringworm, colic, dyspepsia, constipation, strangary and diabetes
		Leaf	Paste	skin diseases, ring worm, eczema, boils and inflammations
		Flower		dry cough and bronchitis
			Gulkand	weak women as purgative and for stomach problems
		Fruit	Pulp	constipation of children's and pregnant women, colic, rheumatism, gout, anorexia, strangary, leprosy, hepatomegaly and jaundice. Gum is used in toothache
		Root	Decoction	fever and constipation
No	Plant Name	Part used	Form of use	Use in / as
5	<i>Cassia holocericea</i> Fresen.	Leaf		constipation, colic, flatulence and indigestion
No	Plant Name	Part used	Form of use	Use in / as
6	<i>Cassia italica</i> Mill. Syn. <i>C. obtusa</i> Roxb. (MINDHI AWAL)	Leaf	Powder	colic, constipation, flatulence and indigestion
No	Plant Name	Part used	Form of use	Use in / as
7	<i>Cassia obtusifolia</i> L. (PUNVADIO)	Leaf	Paste	boils, rheumatism and sciatica
		Seed	Paste	ring worms, scabies, leprosy and eczema
No	Plant Name	Part used	Form of use	Use in / as
8	<i>Cassia occidentalis</i> L. (SUNDARO)	Leaf	Poultis	wounds, ulcers, pruritus
			Powder	cough, bronchitis, asthma, fever
		Root	Paste	Scorpion sting
			Paste with sandal powder	ring worm and inflammations
			Juice with black pepper	Snake bite

No	Plant Name	Part used	Form of use	Use in / as
		Flower	Gulkand	cough and constipation
		Seed	Roasted and powdered	Cough whooping cough, leprosy, strangury, cough, bronchitis, constipation and dyspepsia
9	<i>Cassia pumila</i> Lam. (NANI CHIMED)	Leaf	Paste with milk	Eye ache
10	<i>Cassia sophera</i> L. var. <i>purpurea</i> (Roxb.) Baker Syn. <i>Cassia purpurea</i> Roxb(SUNDRI)	Leaf	Juice	ringworm
			Paste	Wounds, ring worm and ulcers
			Decoction	gonorrhoea, syphilis, asthma and jaundice
		Seed	Paste	ring worm
			Paste with honey	diabetes and cough
		Bark	Infusion	fever and gout and diabetes
11	<i>Cassia tora</i> L. (KUNVADIO)	Leaf	Paste with cow urine	boils and rheumatism, and sciatica
		Root	Paste with Til oil	applied in vagina for easy painless delivery
			Paste	Pityriasis-flaking (or scaling)
		Seed	Roasted and powdered	Coffee
			Paste	Eczema, ring worm, leprosy and scabies.

5. Acknowledgement

I am very thankful to the people of Bhavnagar district area for sharing useful information on the plants and their uses. I am very thankful to the my Ph. D Research Guide Dr. D.C. Bhatt for constant approach for plant exploration and research investigation. I am also thankful to my Principal and head of department of Institute for giving me opportunity to done my work.

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