

An Ethnobotanical Survey of Medicinal Plants used by local peoples in Erumalainayakkanpatti village of Periyakulam Taluk, Theni District, Tamilnadu, India

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Abstract

The use of medicinal plants in the treatment and prevention of diseases is attracting the attention of scientists worldwide. Approximately 2800 plant species are currently used by an estimated about 150,000 indigenous traditional healers in India. The specific part of the plant used for medicinal applications varies from species to species and from one traditional healer to another. This study was carried out to explore and record those plants and plant parts used for treating various human ailments by the traditional healers of the Erumalainayakkanpatti Village in the Periyakulam taluk province, Tamilnadu for medicinal purposes. Ethnobotanical data were collected from 35 traditional healers (26 females and 9 males) in the Erumalainayakkanpatti Village area of Periyakulam taluk by means of a data capture questionnaire focusing on the local names of the medicinal plants, their medicinal uses, the plant parts used, and methods of preparation and of administering treatments to patients. The survey identified 92 medicinal plants from 44 families, used to treat a range of ailments in the Erumalainayakkanpatti Village. The *Amaranthaceae*, *Solanaceae* and *Fabaceae* family was the most commonly used plant family representing 15.9% of all the medicinal plants species recorded by this study, followed by the *Poaceae* and *Euphorbiaceae* family at 13.6%. The plant parts most frequently used were the leaves (42.3%), followed by the Fruits (19.5%), Roots (5.4%), Seed (4.3%), whole plant (9.7%), Flowers (5.4%) and others (13.0%). Most of the traditional healers obtained their extracts by boiling the medicinal plants. The rural communities of the Erumalainayakkanpatti Village possess a wealth of information on medicinal plants and their applications. This ethnobotanical survey can help scientists identify for further research those plants whose medicinal properties may be useful in the development of new drugs.

Key words: Ethnobotanical, Medicinal plants, Local peoples, Theni district.

Introduction

The Rig-Veda written during 4500 BC to 1600 BC is believed to be the oldest repository of human knowledge about medicinal usages of plants in Indian subcontinent (Puspangadan, 1995). According to WHO (World Health Organisation, 2001), about 80% of the world's population, especially in the rural areas depends on herbal medicine for their healthcare needs. The ethnic people residing in different geographical belts of India depends on wild plants to meet their basic requirements and all the ethnic communities have their own pool of secret ethnomedicinal and ethnopharmacological knowledge about the plants available in their surroundings (Muthukumarasamy *et al.*, 2003; Rana *et al.*, 2010; Rajendra *et al.*, 2002; Jain, 2001, which has been serving rural people with its superiority. Due to changing life style, extreme secrecy of traditional healers and negligence of youngsters, the practice and dependence of ethnic societies in folk medicines is in rapid decline globally, therefore, ethnobotanical exploitation and documentation of indigenous knowledge about the usefulness of such a vast pool of genetic resources is deliberately needed (Viswanadhan, 2004; Saikea *et al.*, 2003; Kumar and Tewari, 2003 and Singh, 2004).

Ethnopharmacology, the science of application of indigenous or local medicinal remedies, including plants for treatment of diseases (Gurib-Fakim, 2006), is the investigation of biologically active agents traditionally used by humans (Bruhn and Holmsted, 1981). These active agents included plant mixtures, whole plants and a portion of a plant as well as special preparations from plant materials. Being a multidisciplinary science, successful research in ethnopharmacology requires the interaction of ethnobotanists, natural products chemists, pharmacologists, taxonomists, traditional healers and/or user communities. According to Vanden Berghe *et al.*, (1986), Rojas *et al.*, (1992) and Silva *et al.*, (1996), the goal of ethnobotany or ethnopharmacology, therefore, is to utilize the impressive array of knowledge



assembled by indigenous peoples about the plant and animal products they have used to maintain health. Besides, to the best of our knowledge no ethnobotanical work has been carried out in this area. Keeping these things in mind present study was proposed to document the ethnomedicinal knowledge of traditional healers in Erumalainayakkanpatti, Periyakulam Taluk Periyakulam taluk, Theni district. Tamil Nadu, South India.

Materials and Methods

Description of the study area

Erumalainayakkanpatti, a village in Periyakulam Taluk, Theni district of Tamilnadu state, India which is located 36 km towards west from district capital Theni, 510 km from state capital Chennai. The entire area of Erumalainayakkanpatti village lies between 10.1186°N and 77.54850°E latitude and longitude with an area of nearly 300 sq. km. The altitude of the study area is about 525 m above mean sea level with a mean annual rainfall of 756 mm, concentrated in the rainy season from June to December. In the hottest month, March the mean temperature is 25 to 35°C and in the coldest month, October, the mean temperature is 18.3± 1°C, average humidity is 52%. Semi and tropical monsoon type of climate is prevailing in the village. Soils of the village are mainly red soil, block soil, blackish brown to reddish brown. The general texture class of the soil is loamy sand to loamy clay and is relatively acidic in nature. Erumalainayakkanpatti, is a part of the biodiversity rich Western Ghats which is ecologically very sensitive and economically important for agricultural production and food supply. Medicinal plants in this village play a vital role in meeting the health requirements of the people, they are used in the local and siddha health care systems. The villagers are mostly farmers; the main crops cultivated in Erumalainayakkanpatti, are *Cotten*, *Sugar Cane*, *Sorghum*, *Tomatoes*, *Ladies Finger*, *Mango*, *Sapota* and other vegetables. However, wild plant resources are of great importance for local people who still rely on forest for food, herbs and firewood etc. Generally, villagers are more willing to collect vegetables from the wild rather than cultivate them. Many plants are used as wild vegetables. The villagers derive their main monetary income through the sales of vegetables and forest products such as mushrooms, medicinal plants, wild edible vegetables and fruits etc. No previous floristic studies have been conducted and reported in Erumalainayakkanpatti, village.

Data collection

The study area was investigated to get information from Traditional healer's practitioners and also to cross check the

information provided by the other local healers' practitioners during the earlier visits. During each field survey at least 7 days were spent with the local people in their Traditional healer's hamlets. In order to document the utilization of medicinal plants, a total of eight field surveys were carried out from June 2014– January 2015 in Erumalainayakkanpatti village. A total of few resource persons or informants or traditional healers were identified to get the ethnomedicinal information through direct interviews/oral conversations. They have sound knowledge on medicinal plants found in their surrounding areas and they practice medicine within their families and neighbors. A field datasheet has been prepared to record the plant details with ethnomedicinal information gathered from the traditional healers. Information on local name of plant, plant part used for curing, method of preparation, any other plants/agents used as ingredients, modes of administration and etc. were recorded for each collected ethnomedicinal plant. Identities of the collected plant species were done with the volumes of The Flora of Tamil Nadu Carnatic (Matthew, 1983), The Flora of Presidency of Madras (Gamble, 1935) and was followed to classify the species and binomial was checked with the International Plant Names Index (IPNI). Herbarium specimens were collected in triplicates; one set of voucher specimens were deposited in the herbarium of Department of Botany, Saraswathi Narayanan College, Perungudi, Madurai, TamilNadu

Result and Discussion

In this paper, we focused mainly on plant species reported by the local people in and around the study area for their medicinal uses. Presented data are the general results of the ethnobotanical survey conducted from June 2014 – January 2015.

In the present account, 92 species of angiosperms belonging to 44 families are reported (Table - 1). They are used as ethnomedicines for various several diseases like Jaundice, Cancer, Chicken box, Liver complaints, Dengue fever and Diabetics by employing the preparations in the form of extracts, pastes, juices, powders, etc. Other common diseases and health complaints like Abortion, Anti inflammations, Eye problems, Cold, Cough, Heat Reducer, Dengue fever, Asthma, Diarrhea, Vomiting, Fever, Urinary inflammation, Diabetics, Cancer, Skin diseases, Digestive, Piles, Allergy, Dog bite, Bone joint, Liver complaints, Malaria, Snake bites, Rheumatism, Kidney stone, Ulcer, Wound, Chicken box, Sperm producer, Tooth ache, Dysentery, Stop vomiting, Head ache, jaundice, Heart Attack, Wound healing, Anemia and Eczema are cured by using of various plants found in the Local healers of Erumalainayakkanpatti Village.



Table -1: Ethnomedicinal plants used by Erumalainayakkanpatti local People

S.No	Plant Name	Family	Vernacular Name	Part used / Medicinal uses
1	<i>Abutilon indicum</i> (L.)	Malvaceae	Thutthi	Decoction of dried leaves are mixed with jiggery and taken orally to treat piles, body heat and skin diseases
2	<i>Acalypha indica</i> (L.)	Euphorbiaceae	Kuppameni	Decoction of the leaves is used to laxative, Juice of the crushed leaves is applied externally for cure of Scopies, skin diseases, Vomiting, Earaches, Ulcers, Reliving pain and Non- poisonous Snake bite
3	<i>Achyranthus spera</i> (L.)	Amaranthaceae	Naayuruvi	Decoction of fresh leaves is taken orally to get relief from cold, cough, breathing problems and throat pain
4	<i>Acorus calamus</i> (L.)	Araceae	Vasambu	Decoction of Rhizome is used to oil Effects on the Digestive System , Toothache and to help stop smoking
5	<i>Adhatoda zeylanica</i> Medikus	Acanthaceae	Adhatoda	Decoction of fresh leaves is taken orally to get relief from cold, cough, breathing problems and throat pain
6	<i>Aegle marmelos</i> (L.)	Rutaceae	Vilvam	Decoction of fresh leaves is taken orally twice a day for a week to treat cough, breast inflammation, eye problems and to keep the body in cool
7	<i>Allium cepa</i> (L.)	Liliaceae	Ulli	Bulb of the onion is used for diabetes, cold, high blood pressure, asthma and joint disorders
8	<i>Aloe vera</i> (L.)	Liliaceae	Kathalai	Leaf gel are taken orally to control diabetes, Protecting the skin and skin diseases, Eczema, pruritus and psoriasis
9	<i>Alternanthera sessilis</i> (L.) R.Br.ex Dc.	Amaranthaceae	Ponnaganni	Powder is used to treat snake bites and to stop the vomiting of blood. Decoction with some salt is taken to stop vomiting blood. Paste is used spines from the body
10	<i>Amaranthus caudatus</i> (L.)	Amaranthaceae	Thandaganni keerai	Extract of the plant is used treatment of ulcerated mouths and throats, externally as a wash for ulcer and sores. Juice of the roots is used to relieve headaches.
11	<i>Amaranthus spinosus</i> (L.)	Amaranthaceae	Mullu Kerai	Decoction of fresh leaves and stem are taken orally twice a day for three days to cure indigestion
12	<i>Amaranthus viridis</i> (L.)	Amaranthaceae	Kubbai keerai	Decoction is used to stop dysentery and inflammations Root juice is used to treat urination. Leaves powder is used to boils abscesses, treat inflammation
13	<i>Amorphophallus paeoniifolius</i> (Dennst.) Nicolson	Araceae	Karunai kilangu	Rhizome is used to curing stomach pain, piles, anemia cold, cough and asthma
14	<i>Andrographis paniculata</i> (Burm.f.) Wallich ex Nees	Acanthaceae	Nilavembu	Juice of the leaves used for Diabetics, Dengue fever and contraceptive purpose
15	<i>Annona squamosa</i> (L.)	Annonaceae	Seetha	The bark and leaves decoction is used to stop diarrhea, while the root is used in the treatment of dysentery
16	<i>Argemone mexicana</i> (L.)	Papaveraceae	Naikaduku	Latex from the plant is poured directly in the affected places for two weeks to cure fungal infection on head (poochi/ puzhu vettu).
17	<i>Azadirachta indica</i> ADr.Juss.	Meliaceae	Vempu	Tender leaves are taken orally for excretion of intestinal worms from stomach and contraceptive. Powdered leaves are used for diabetes
18	<i>Bambusa arundinacea</i> (Retz.) Willd.	Poaceae	Moongil	Shoot tip is Extract is used to treat inflammation conditions. Paste of roots is various skin diseases

19	<i>Bombax ceipa</i> (L.)	Bombacaceae	Ilavam	The broad and thick prickles of the plant are rubbed on stone and the paste thus obtained is applied on pimples to disappear
20	<i>Borassus flabellifer</i> (L.)	Arecaceae	Panai	Root Decoction is used to curing respiratory diseases. Ash of the flower is taken to relieve heartburn and enlarged spleen and liver. Bark decoction is used to mouth wash
21	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i> (L.)	Asclepiadaceae	Erukku	Latex is used to cure wound , Flowers Powder, Juice Leaves is used to Snake bites, wounds, Root bark is used to cure Cough, cold
22	<i>Canna indica</i> (L.)	Cannaceae	Kalvalai	Whole plant is used to cure Kidney Stone
23	<i>Capsicum annum</i> (L.)	Solanaceae	Milagaai	Fruit is used curing various problems with digestion including upset stomach, intestinal gas , stomach pain, diarrhea and cramps
24	<i>Cardiospermum halicacabum</i> (L.)R.Br.	Sapindaceae	Mudakathan	Leaves are ground with hot water and taken orally twice a day for two days to treat joint pain and body pain
25	<i>Carica papaya</i> (L.)	Caricaceae	Pappali	Fruit juice is used to cure warts, corns, cancers of the uterus, syphilis and to remove mineral concentrations in the urine
26	<i>Carissa carandas</i> (L.)	Apocynaceae	Kalakai	Leaf is used to cure Fever, Fruits is used in skin infections, extract of root material was found to decrease blood presser
27	<i>Cassia auriculata</i> (L.)	Ceasalpiniaceae	Avaram	Fresh flower petals are made into a paste and taken orally with honey once a day before going to bed for a month to treat kidney problems
28	<i>Casuarina equisetifolia</i> Forster & Forster f.	Moraceae	Savukku	Bark is used to cure Antidysentery & Antidiarrheal property
29	<i>Celosia argentea</i> (L.)Var.	Amaranthaceae	Mahali Keerai	Leaf is used to curing Jaundice, Gonorrhea, Wounds, Fever
30	<i>Chenopodium polyspermum</i> (L.)	Amaranthaceae	Thoil keerai	Leaf is used to Cooked and used like Spinach
31	<i>Cissus quadrangularis</i> (L.)	Vitaceae	Pirandai	Paste made from the tender stem is applied over the painful places to get relief from joint pain
32	<i>Citrullus colocynthis</i> (L.) Schrad.	cucurpitaceae	Kachamuttikai	Fruit is used curing Diabetes, Diabetic neuropathy,
33	<i>Citrus medica</i> (L.)	Rutaceae	Lemon	Fruit is used to curing Nail infection, Refreshener
34	<i>Clausena dentata</i> (Willd.)Roemer	Rutaceae	Kattu karuvepilai	Leaf is used to curing Vegetable and Medicine
35	<i>Clitoria ternatea</i> (L.)	Fabaceae	Sanguppoo	Root paste is used to curing Wounds
36	<i>Coccinia indica</i> , Wight & Arn.	Cucurbitaceae	Covai	Leaves is used to curing Ulcer and Diarrhoea
37	<i>Coriandrum sativum</i> (L.)	Apiaceae	Kothamalli	Fruit is used to cure Cold and Cough
38	<i>Cynodon dactylon</i> (L.) Pers	Poaceae	Arugam pull	Fresh plant parts are ground with hot water and made into a paste and taken orally in empty stomach to ensure the normal blood circulation.
39	<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> (L.)	Cyperaceae	Korai	Fresh tubers are made into a paste and taken orally along with honey to treat fever and swellings.
40	<i>Datura discolor</i> Bernh.	Solanaceae	Karuomathai	Flower is used to curing Sinus Problems
41	<i>Decalepis hamiltonii</i> Wight & Arn.	Asclepiadaceae	Mahali kizangu	Tuberous root Blood purifier, Indigestion
42	<i>Dendrophthoe falcata</i> (L.f.)Ettingsh.	Loranthaceae	Pulluruvi	Whole plant is used to cure Rheumatism
43	<i>Eclipta prostrata</i> (L.)	Asteraceae	Karisilanganni	Leaf is used to curing Memory Power, Bones
44	<i>Erythrina variegata</i> (L.)	Fabaceae	Mullu	Leaf is used to curing Cold, Cough

			murungai	
45	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i> (L.)	Moraceae	Aalamaram	Fruit- Dandruff ,Cracks on the Foot
46	<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i> linn	Fabaceae	Athimaduram	Leaves Powder is used to treat stomach pain, chronic cough and cold
47	<i>Hibiscus rosa-sinensis</i> (L.)	Malvaceae	Chembaruthi	Root and Flower is used to curing Venereal disease, Blackening hair
48	<i>Ipomoea pes-tigridis</i> (L.)	Convolvulaceae	Poonai kerai	Seed paste is used to curing Wounds
49	<i>Ixora coccinea</i> (L.)	Rubiaceae	Idlipoo	Flower is used to curing Eczema.
50	<i>Jasminum angustifolium</i> (L.) Willd.	Oleaceae	Kattu malligai	Flowers is used to cure Fevers, Urinary inflammation
51	<i>Jatropha curcas</i> (L.)	Euphorbiaceae	Kattamanaku	Bark and Latex is used to cure Stomach problems
52	<i>Lawsonia inermis</i> (L.)	Lythraceae	Maruthani	Leaf is used to Hair dye
53	<i>Leucas aspera</i> (Willd.)Link	Lamiaceae	Thumbai	Juice extracted from the leaves is mixed with honey and taken orally to treat skin allergy
54	<i>Manihot esculenta</i> Crantz	Euphorbiaceae	Kappai kilangu	Tuber is used to Edible
55	<i>Manilkara zapota</i> (L.) P.Royen	Sapotaceae	Sappota	Fruits is used curing Cough, Cold,Rheumatic diseases
56	<i>Melia azedarach</i> (L.)	Meliaceae	Malai vembu	Whole plants is used to Dengue Fever, Female Fertility Problems
57	<i>Mimosa pudica</i> (L.)	Fabaceae	Thottal siningi	Leaf is used to cure Anti fertility wounds.
58	<i>Momordica charantia</i> (L.)	Cucurbitaceae	Pagarkai	Fruits is used to Reduce blood sugar level.
59	<i>Morinda pubescens</i> J.E.Smith	Rubiaceae	Manjanathi	Leaf is used to curing Rheumatism
60	<i>Moringa oleifera</i> Lam.	Moringaceae	Murungai	Leaf is used to Sperm producer
61	<i>Musa paradisiaca</i> (L.)	Musaceae	Vaazhai	Whole Plant is used to curing Kidney Stone,Wounds
62	<i>Ocimum americanum</i> (L.)	Lamiaceae	Pachilai	Leaf is used to curing Skin Diseases, Cold, Dysentery, Tooth problems
63	<i>Ocimum tenuiflorum</i> (L.)	Lamiaceae	Thulasi	10 to 15 fresh leaves are taken orally twice a day to get relief from cold, cough and fever
64	<i>Pennisetum glaucum</i> (L.) R.Br.	Poaceae	Kambu	Seed is used to curing Weight loss, Cool the body
65	<i>Pergularia daemia</i> (Forsskal) Choir.	Asclepiadaceae	Veeli baruthi	Milky latex obtained from the plant is heated on fire and the smoke is inhaled thrice a day to cure cold in children
66	<i>Phyllanthus amarus</i> Schum.& Thonn.	Euphorbiaceae	Kizhaa nelli	Whole plant is used to curing Jaundice
67	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> L.	Euphorbiaceae	Nelli	Fruit is used to curing Digestive agent
68	<i>Pithecellobium dulce</i> (Roxb.) Benth.	Mimosaceae	Kodukkapuli	Fruit is used to curing Digestive problems
69	<i>Plectranthus amboinicus</i> (Lour.) Spreng.	Lamiaceae	Omavalli	Leaf is used to curing Cold, Cough
70	<i>Plumeria rutral</i> (L.)	Apocynaceae	Arali	Flower and Seed is used to cure Throat, Cold, Cough
71	<i>Pongamia pinnata</i> (L.)Pierre	Fabaceae	Pungam	Root powder is used to curing Sores twice a day
72	<i>Psidium guajava</i> (L.)	Myrtaceae	Koyya	Fruit is used to cure Digestive agent
73	<i>Punica granatum</i> (L.)	Punicaceae	Madhulam	Fruit is used to curing Blood purifier

74	<i>Rauvolfia tetraphylla</i> (L.)	Apocynaceae	Pambu kadithalai	Whole plants is used to cure Malaria, Snake bites
75	<i>Saccharum officinarum</i> (L.)	Poaceae	Karumbu	Rhizome is used to curing Coughs, Skin problems, Anaemia
76	<i>Sesamum orientale</i> L.	Pedaliaceae	Ellu	Leaf is used to curing Head ache
77	<i>Sesbania grandiflora</i> (L.) Poiret	Fabaceae	Agathi	Leaf is used to curing Gastric trouble, Diarrhea, Fever, Diabetes
78	<i>Solanum nigrum</i> (L.)	Solanaceae	Manathakali	Decoction of fresh leaves are taken orally early in the morning for two months to treat mouth ulcer. Also the decoction is used as mouth wash
79	<i>Solanum trilobatum</i> (L.)	Solanaceae	Thuthuvalai	Leaf- Cough, Fever, Cancer, Tuberculosis problem
80	<i>Solanum violaceum</i> Ortega	Solanaceae	Sundakai	Fruits is used to Body strength
81	<i>Sorghum vulgare</i> (Pers.)	Poaceae	Cholam	Seed is used to curing Urinary and Kidney complaints
82	<i>Syzygium cumini</i> (L.) Skeels	Myrtaceae	Noval	Fruit is used to curing Diabetics
83	<i>Tamarindus indica</i> (L.)	Cesalpiniaceae	Puliya maram	Fruits are used to curing Dysentery.
84	<i>Tectona grandis</i> (L.)f.	Verbenaceae	Thekku	Leaf is used to curing Bone joint
85	<i>Tephrosia purpurea</i> (L.)Pers.	Fabaceae	Kozhunji	Roots is used to curing Dysentery & Stop Vomiting
86	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i> (Dc.) Wight & Arn.	Combretaceae	Maruthu	Shade dried stem bark is mixed with water and jiggery and taken orally once a day for a month to treat breast pain and heart weakness
87	<i>Tragia involucrata</i> (L.)	Euphorbiaceae	Senthatti	Leaf is used to cure Bronchitis
88	<i>Tribulus terrestris</i> (L.)	Zygophyllaceae	Nerunji	Shade dried plant parts are made into powder and mixed with water and taken orally once a day for two weeks to treat kidney problems
89	<i>Tridax procumbens</i> L.	Astraceae	Thathasedi	Paste made from the fresh leaves is applied over the wounds to heal soon
90	<i>Vetiveria zizanioides</i> (L.) Nash	Poaceae	Vetiver	Root – Hair Growth, Body cooling
91	<i>Vitex negundo</i> (L.)	Verbenaceae	Notchi	Fresh leaves are boiled with water and the vapour thus obtained is inhaled thrice a day to get relief from fever and cold
92	<i>Ziziphus jujuba</i> (L.) Gaertner, nonMiller	Rhamnaceae	Elanthai	Bark is used to Sores in throat Fruit is used to cure Stomach pain.

The plant material is employed in the form of decoctions, extracts, pastes, juice & Powder some times in combination with other parts of same or different plants other substances, such as milk and turmeric powder, sugar candy, curd, honey, hair oil, are also used in various preparations. The data collected from the Local people of Erumalainayakkanpatti pertaining to the treatment of various ailments by Plant parts used for medicinal preparation were fruits, flowers, bark, roots, leaves, Stem, seeds and the whole plants. The Plant form representation of plant Form used in Shrub (27%), Tree (32%), Herb (37%) and Climber (4%) (Fig-1) The most frequently utilized plant parts percentage were leaves (42.4%), followed by the roots (5.4%), seeds (4.5%), Whole plant (9.8%) fruits (19.5%), others (13.0%) flowers (5.4%), in

the form of Roots, Seed, fruit, flowers, whole plant, leaves, Others (Fig-2).

The medicinal plants based on their use in treatment of 40 different diseases were found to be very valuable such as Kidney stone, Jaundice, Heart Attack, asthma, Malaria diabetes, STD's, paralysis, snake bite, Liver complaints, Fever, Chikken box and Eye problems. Among the different plant parts used for the preparation of medicine the leaves were the most important and frequently used and majority of the remedies reported in the present study are by administering the leaves orally.

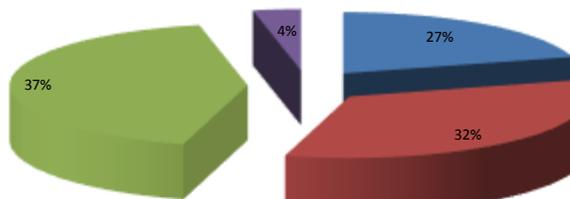


Fig.1. Plant form representation of plant used in Ethnobotany in Erumalainayakkanpatti province of Periyakulam taluk.

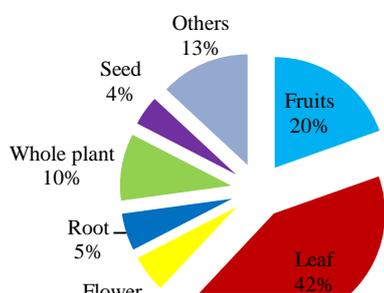


Fig.2. Frequency of plant parts employed in ethno medicinal uses by the village peoples of Erumalainayakkanpatti (Other parts include Fruits, Leaf, Flower, Root, Whole Plant, Seed, Others).

The most dominant families of ethnobotanical importance are Amaranthaceae (7 species), Fabaceae (7 species), Solanaceae (7 species), Euphorbiaceae (6 species), Poaceae (6 species), Lamiaceae (4 species), Rutaceae (4 species), Apocynaceae (3 species), Asclepiadaceae (3 species), Araceae (2 species), Cucurbitaceae (2 species), Ceasalpinaceae (2 species), Liliaceae

(2 species), Moraceae (2 species), Rubiaceae (2 species), Myrtaceae (2 species), Acanthaceae (2 species), Meliaceae (2 species), Malvaceae (2 species), Verbenaceae (2 species), Loranthaceae (1 species), Orchidaceae (1 species), Convolvulaceae (1 species), Musaceae (1 species), Papaveraceae (1 species), Arecaceae (1 species), Caricaceae (1 species), Vitaceae (1 species), Apiaceae (1 species), Astraceae (1 species), Annonaceae (1 species), Cyperaceae (1 species), Oleaceae (1 species), Lythraceae (1 species), Moringaceae (1 species), Mimosaceae (1 species), Punicaceae (1 species), Combretaceae (1 species), Zygophyllaceae (1 species), Rhamnaceae (1 species), Bombacaceae (1 species), Sapindaceae (1 species), Convolvulaceae (1 species),

Musaceae (1 species), Pedaliaceae (1 species), Sapotacea (1 species), In the present study percentage of remedies using for different diseases, Traditional healers of Theni district used 6 species to treat body pain relief, 5 species to treat skin diseases and other for different problems like jaundice, STDs, female genital problems, fever, poisonous bites and diabetes.

Conclusion

Even though the very objective of the present study is documentation of the diminishing wealth of traditional knowledge for future, it opens up an array of opportunities for further studies. The scientific validation of the claims in the present study is priority among them, which not only authenticate the age old practice, but also contribute towards possible new drugs from herbal sources. Efforts in this direction may provide the benefit of regional information to the global community.

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