AN EVALUATION OF TRADITIONAL KNOWLEDGE BASED STUDIES IN UTTAR PRADESH AND UTTARAKHAND

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Abstract: Dwindling ethnicity in states in question and renaissance of traditional knowledge and phytotherapy especially in AYUSH systems of alternative medicine have prompted the authors to document the present scenario of traditional knowledge for the benefit of new researchers and technothirsty Herbalists because despite recognition of 175 medicinal species in Uttarakhand alone, there remains untapped reservoir of various phytochemicals awaiting intensive investigation for their biological activity based on existing pool of traditional knowledge which is being documented in present communication.

INTRODUCTION

Since remote past wide variety of plants/their parts (root, stem, bark, flower, fruit)/products (edible carbohydrates, proteins, carotenoids, fibers, gums, resins, flavonoids, terpenoids, vitamins, essential oils, etc.) are known to meet daily sustenance, religious, cultural, social, economic and health needs of human beings besides maintaining biodiversity and eco-equilibrium. Plants are also known for their nutritional, mineral, medicinal, aromatic and savory quality besides contraceptive, insecticidal and antioxidant properties (Singh and Vats, 2006; Ansari and Joshi, 2004; Agrawal, 1988).

Renaissance of traditional knowledge and phytotherapy became imperative due to the diversity, accessibility, affordability, biodegradability, less phyto-toxicity, preventive as well as curative properties of NTFPS in Ayurvedic, Unani, Sidha, Homeopathic and Tibetan systems of alternative medicines used to treat stress related, anxiety related, psychosomatic, post traumatic, digestion related, radiation related, toxicity related, disability related, infection related and life style related disorders (Singh and Vats, 2006; Sharma, 2007). Consequently, ethnobotanical studies/traditional knowledge were undertaken in UP and Uttarakhand and their update is presented herein, especially so because agrotechniques of high altitude medicinal and aromatic plants may be developed in view of threats to plants and, herbal potential may be fully worked out. Present work comprises only of references without details for which papers cited may be referred to.

Table 1. Documentation of Ethnobotanical Studies in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand

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