

Review of region wise distribution of medicinal plants of India

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Abstract:

Ayurveda has described specific regions for the availability of medicinal plants. *Charaksamhita* has described the three important regions under the *deshvichar* of medicinal plants like *saadharan*, *anup* and *jangal*^[1]. This research article is a review type and has described regionwise distribution of medicinal plants of India^[2]. Maharashtra, Rajasthan, Gujarat, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Tamil Nadu are the various regions considered for the study. It is observed that *Ashwagandha* (*Withaniasomnifera*), *shatavari* (*Asparagus racemosus*), *safedmusli* (*Chlorophytumborivillianum*) are the important plants found in these

regions. Other commonly used important plants are also focussed in this article.

Keywords:

Deshvichar, region wise distribution, *Charaksamhita*.

AIM :

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OBJECTIVES:

- 1). To study the *deshvichar* (region distribution) according to *ayurveda*.
- 2) To study the different regions of India and important medicinal plants cultivated in those regions.

MATERIAL & METHODS:

Geographical distribution of India was studied from all the available sources like internet, research articles etc.

OBSERVATION:

It was observed that following plants are commonly used for medicinal purposes^[3]. The important states for the cultivation of medicinal plants are found to be as follows Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh,

Himalayas, Bengal, Western Peninsula, Assam, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Bihar, Karnataka. Individual list of plants with their geographic distribution in detail is as follows,

1. *Amalaki-Emblica officinalis*, family is *Euphorbiaceae*. The important states in which it is commonly found are UP, Gujarat, Rajasthan, Maharashtra. It is used as an Aphrodisiac, astringent, digestive, diuretic, laxative and tonic and is useful in anaemia, jaundice, dyspepsia, haemorrhagic disorders, diabetes, asthma, bronchitis.

2. *Ashwagandha-Withania somnifera*, family is *Solanaceae*. The important states in which it is commonly found are Madhya Pradesh and Rajasthan. It is used

as an Aphrodisiac, tonic, diuretic, narcotic, abortifacient and is used in rheumatism, debility from old age.

3. *Ashoka-Saraca asoca* (roxb.) Dc Wild., family is *Leguminosae*. The important states in which it is commonly found are Himalayas, Bengal. It is used as an astringent used in menorrhagia and uterine affections, internal bleeding, bleeding haemorrhoids and haemorrhagic dysentery.

4. *Ativisha-Aconitum heterophyllum* Wall, family is *Ranunculaceae*. The important states in which it is commonly found are common in Alpine and subalpine zone of the Himalayas from Indus to Kumaon from 6000 to 15000 ft. from the sea level. It is used as an antipyretic, aphrodisiac, astringent, tonic and is used in diarrhoea, indigestion, cough, troubles during dentition in children.

5. *Vidang-Embeliaribes* Burm., family is *Myrsinaceae*. The important states in which it is commonly found are the hilly parts of India, Assam and Tamil Nadu upto to 1700 m. It is used as anthelmintic, astringent, carminative, stimulant and tonic. It is used in colic, constipation, flatulence and worms.

6. *Bilva-Aegle marmelos* L.Corr., family is *Rutaceae*. It is distributed throughout the country. It is used as aromatic, astringent, carminative, cooling, laxative, stomachic and is used in colitis, diarrhoea, dysentery and flatulence.

7. *Brahmi-Bacopa monnieri* L., family is *Scrophulariaceae*. A small herb found throughout India upto 4000 feet. Plant is an annual creeper and is mostly found near water-logged place. It is used as nervine tonic/memory enhancer.

8. *Chandan-Santalum album* Linn, family is *Santalaceae*. It is a small evergreen tree, distributed in dry scrub forests of Salem, Mysore, Coorg, Coimbatore, Nilgiris upto 900 m. altitude. It is used as an antiseptic, healing of local inflammations, fever. It is internally administered in cystitis, gonorrhoea, haemorrhagia, urinary disorders.

9. *Chirait-Swertia chirata* syn., family is *Gentianaceae*. It is an erect herb, found in temperate Himalayas between 1300-3000 m. from Kashmir to Bhutan and Khasia hills. It is scarcely available in the market and generally substituted by *Andrograpis paniculata* Nees or other species of *Swertia*. It is used as a tonic, stomachic, laxative and is useful in anorexia, biliary disorders, cough,

constipation, fevers, skin diseases, worms.

10. *Guduchi-Tinosporacordifolia* wild miers, ex hook, family is *Menispermaceae*. It is a large, glabrous, deciduous climbing shrub found throughout tropical India. It is used in general debility, pyrexia, skin diseases, gout, rheumatic arthritis and sprue.

11. *Guggul-Commiphora wightii*, family is *Burseraceae*. A shrub or small tree reported to be found in Karnataka, Rajasthan, Deccan and Gujarat. It is used as a carminative, antispasmodic, disphoretic, ecboic, antisyphagative, aphrodisiac, emmenagogue. Gum resin is commonly used for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis.

12. *Daruharidra-Berberisaristata* DC, family is *Berberidaceae*. An erect spinous shrub, 2 – 6 m. high, it occurs in the Himalayas between 2000 – 3000 m & also in the Nilgiri Hills, Assam, Bihar and Himalayan Region. It is used as a stomachic, astringent, tonic, antiperiodic, diaphoretic, antipyretic, purgative and is used in menorrhagia, diarrhoea, jaundice, skin diseases, malarial fever.

13. *Isabgol-Plantago Ovata* Forsk, family is *Plantaginaceae*. It is a herb found in Punjab plains. It is used as a demulscent,

cooling, diuretic; used in inflammatory conditions of the mucous membrane of gastro intestinal and genitourinary tracts, in chronic dysentery, diarrhoea and constipation.

14. *Jatamansi-Nardostachys*

jatamansi, family is *Valerianaceae*. An erect perennial herb with long, stout, woody rootstock; found in alpine Himalayas at 3500-5000 m. extending eastwards to sikkim. It is aromatic, bitter, tonic, antispasmodic, stimulant, antiseptic, diuretic, emmenagogue. Used in epilepsy, hysteria, chorea, convulsions, palpitation of heart, mental disorders, insomnia.

15. *Kalmegh-Andrographis paniculata*, family is *Acanthaceae*. It is a small herb found throughout India in plains of Himachal Pradesh to Assam, Mizoram, Gujarat, Bihar and South India. It is used in the Ayurvedic formulations for debility, chronic malaria, jaundice, anemia and loss of appetite.

16. *Kutaki-Picrorhiza Kurroa Royle ex Benth*, family is *Scrophulariaceae*. It is a perennial herb, found in Alpine Himalayas from Kashmir to Sikkim at altitudes of 2700 – 4500 m. It is a bitter tonic, stomachic and is used in dyspepsia, fever, diseases of liver & spleen

including jaundice, anaemia, scorpion stings and in purgative preparations.

17. *Kokum-Garcinia indica*, family is *Clusiaceae*. It is found frequently in evergreen and deciduous forests along the coasts on windward side of Western Ghats to 400 m. It is a very good medicine for relieving acid peptic disorders, inflammation of skin etc.

18. *Kushtha-Saussurea lappa*, family is *Compositae*. It is found in Kashmir valley (J&K), Lahaulspiti (HP), Garhwal (UP). It is renowned for its pleasant fragrance. It can be used in pitta disorders.

19. *Liquorice-Glycyrrhiza glabra Linn*, family is *Papilionaceae*. It is a herb, reported to be found in sub-Himalayan tracts. Most of the requirement of Pharmaceutical industries is met by import only. It is recently introduced in Gujarat, Himachal Pradesh and Haryana. It is a laxative, demulcent, tonic, aphrodisiac. Used in sore throat, cough, genitourinary diseases, anorexia, asthma, persistent low fever.

20. *Long pepper-Piper longum*, family is *Piperaceae*. It is a slender climber with perennial woody roots, found in parts of India with high temperature and humid

damp climate, viz., Western ghats, central Himalayas to Assam, Khasi and Mikir hills and lower hills of Bengal. It is a tonic, sedative, vermifuge, cholagogue, emmenagogue and is used in cough, cold, chronic bronchitis, palsy, gout, rheumatism, lumbago, insomnia, epilepsy, asthma, anorexia, piles, dyspepsia, leucoderma.

21. *Madhunashini-Gymnema Sylvestre R.Br*, family is *Asclepiadaceae*. It is a perennial climber found in Western Ghats, Konkan, Tamilnadu, Karnataka and Uttar Pradesh. It is astringent, stomachic, tonic, refrigerant, antidiabetic. Leaves have a peculiar property of neutralising temporarily the taste sensation for sugar and used in diabetes. It is used in diabetes, liver disorders, cardiac diseases, amenorrhoea, cough and asthma.

22. *Shatavari-Asparagus racemosus Willd*, family is *Liliaceae*. It is a climber found almost all over India. It is used as an antidysenteric, diuretic, demulcent, nutritive tonic, galactagogue, aphrodisiac, antispasmodic. It is used in epilepsy, diarrhoea, blood dysentery, haemophilic disorders, swellings.

23. *Shankpushpi-Convolvulus pluricaulis*, family is *Convolvulaceae*. A

prostrate perennial herb found all over India, in Lalitpur district found in Talbehath, Meharauni and Lalitpur forest ranges. Present day availability is very low, approximately 50 – 60 quintal per year. It is used in insomnia, insanity and epilepsy, cough, skin disorders, hyperpyrexia, general debility.

24. *Safed musli-Chlorophytum borivillanum*, family is *Liliaceae*. It is commonly found in Rajasthan, northern India. It is an aphrodisiac, nutritive tonic and improves general debility.

25. *Senna-Cassia angustifolia*, family is *Caesalpinaceae*. It is found in Tamilnadu, Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Delhi. It is a laxative, purgative and used in constipation.

RESULT:

Thus, it is seen from the above data that medicinal plants are widely distributed in India. Each and every region of this country can fetch suitable climatic conditions for cultivation of particular medicinal plant. Thus, the *deshvichar* mentioned in ayurvedic texts is still applied in this era of 21st century.

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