TITLE:

ESTABLISHMENT OF HERBAL GARDEN , HERBAL MUSEUM AND HERBARIUM FOR THE COLLECTION AND PRESERVATION OF ETHNO-MEDICINAL PLANTS WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS TO THE TRIBAL PLANTS OF WESTERN GHATS.

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I. Abstract Body

The present study investigated the Western Ghats, specifically the High Ranges of the district of Idukki , which is home to numerous medicinal plants. Of the approximately 5000 species of flowering plants found in the region, about 70% are claimed to be medicinal. These plants are being used as drugs by local community and tribal people of the region for generations. Due to the continued deforestation, accelerated climate changes, soil erosion and floods, the existence of most of these plants are endangered and some are on the verge of extinction. Even for the plants who are still abundant, the knowledge of the medicinal use of these plants are transmitted orally from one generation to the next among the local people, especially among the tribal community. The local people believe that the medicinal value of the plant will be lost if its usage is disclosed and are reluctant to disclose the usage to others, except to a very few close relatives. Uncontrolled loss of medicinal plants in Western Ghats negatively influence the healthcare system and biodiversity of India.The knowledge about the type and usage of most medicinal plants in Western Ghats has not been recorded or preserved properly. Therefore the conservation of medicinal plants is of utmost importance for future generation &sustainable use.

Therefore, it is high time to preserve the knowledge and the plants alike as both are endangered. As a college situated in the most backward tribal region of Idukki district with the mission of the upliftment of the local community, Pavanatma College, Murikkassery, Idukki, Kerala, India ,in collaboration with Kurichiyil Ayurvedic Hospital and Bio-Research Centre, Thadiyampadu, Idukki, Kerala, India, is committed to the preservation of the medicinal plants of the region and the indigenous knowledge of the medicinal values of these plants. With this objective, the college plans to establish a herbal garden for growing these plants in a scientific and systematic manner. As part of the project it is planned to establish a herbaria of medicinal plants and to prepare a library of photographs showing various stages of the plant growth. It is also planned to create a digital database listing the knowledge of the tribal and indigenous people by conducting extensive interviews and interface meetings with them.

I. Reference:

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