The Uses of Medicinal Plants in the Treatment of Diseases
-viewpoint-

TAUSEEF AHMAD
Sahah Abad Dir (Lower), 18750
Khyber Pukhtoon Khwa
Pakistan

SHAHABUDDIN
Department of Botany, Malakand University
Pakistan

Background

In the treatment of various diseases of humans and animals, the medicinal plants were used from the ancient times and it is an efficient source to treat the diseases (Farnsworth 1985). Even in the modern era the use of medicinal plants is increased and the research is still continuing on it. These plants are the source of food, vitamins and trace elements needed for the human health. The medicinal plants have been used in the treatment of different diseases by the ancient civilizations, Egyptian, Chinese and even Greek and Roman (Aftab and Sial 1999). The indigenous knowledge about the medicinal plants is gathered by many local people from various regions of Pakistan (Tareen et al. 2002; Durrani et al. 2003; Durrani and Manzoor 2006; Manzoor et al. 2013).

Pakistan has a rich source of medicinal plants. Almost 6000 flowering plants are found in Pakistan, which has a great medicinal importance. 200 different plant species are used in Pakistan for the treatment of different diseases which include a variety of skin disorders, kidney diseases, diarrhea and
The early studies indicate that many plant extracts have different activities, such as antimicrobial, antioxidant, anticancer etc. The extracts of *Azadirachta indica* (neem plant), chewing sticks, have antimicrobial activity and are effective against *Streptococcus mutans* and *Streptococcus faecalis* and also have the insecticidal activities (Almas 1999; Mulla 1999). Hayat *et al*. (2004b) reported the antimicrobial activity of *Zizyphus vulgaris* root extract against gram positive bacteria *Staphylococcus aureus* and gram negative bacteria *Escherichia coli*. The antioxidant activity of Ocimum and Cinnamon extracts has been reported (Middleton and Kandaswami 1993). The medicinal plants also have Anticarcinogenic activity. Samresh *et al*. (2003) reported that leaves of *Ocimum tenuiflorum* possess anticancerous properties. The young shoot of *Aerva javanica* (Local name: Bui booti (Saraiki); Sparai, Pashto) is used for wounds and abscesses. The leaves of *Alhagi maurorum* (English name: Camel Thorn; Local name: Jawan Janasa; Tibbi name: Jawansa) is used for abdominal troubles, de-worming and cooling effects. The milk of *Calotropis procera*
Conclusions

From the present study it has been concluded that the medicinal plants have great importance in the treatment of new and older diseases. Further research is needed to find out the activity of the medicinal plants against those diseases where the resistance is created. Especially in Pakistan more studies are needed to arrange on local available plants.

BIBLIOGRAPHY


