

**AN ETHNOBOTANICAL STUDY OF THE MEDICINAL PLANTS FOUND IN
BULUMULLA, ADMINISTRATIVE DIVISION, KANDY, SRI LANKA**

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Ethnobotanical studies help preserve indigenous knowledge of local herbs, support biodiversity conservation, integrate traditional remedies into modern healthcare, and discover new therapeutics. This study aims to explore the diversity and traditional knowledge of medicinal plants used by the Bulumulla community in Kandy, Sri Lanka and examines their documented therapeutic potential. The data were collected through semi-structured and open-ended interviews with 253 volunteers based on their local names, morphological differences, parts used, preparation methods, and therapeutic applications. Botanical names were verified with Royal Botanical Gardens, Peradeniya. Ethnobotanical indices were employed to quantify the importance and usage patterns: 45 medicinal plants belonging to 25 botanical families were found. Out of the total participants, 50.7% claimed the use of medicinal plants for *Jvara*, *Kasa*, *Shvasa*, *Shotha*, and *Vata roga*. The leaves were the most frequently used plant parts (53.7%), and decoctions were the most commonly employed preparation method (72.9%). The highest UV was recorded for *Plectranthus amboinicus* (use value; UV = 0.99) and the relative popularity level (RPL=0.98) in antispasmodic remedies. *Lamiaceae* emerged as the most represented (family importance value; FIV = 19.9%), followed by *Asteraceae* (FIV = 19.8%). The most cited medicinal plant was *Cassia fistula* (relative frequency citation; RFC = 0.88), followed by *Plectranthus zeylanicus* (RFC = 0.86) and *Vernonia cinerea* (RFC = 0.84). *Phyllanthus niruri* had the highest rank order priority (ROP = 85.9). The findings emphasize the richness and need to conserve and promote plant biodiversity and indigenous wisdom in Bulumulla by utilizing medicinal plants and developing potential drug leads. This study serves as a foundation for future pharmacological validation and the potential integration of local medicinal practices into broader healthcare systems.

Keywords: Ethnobotany, Ethnobotanical indices, Ayurveda, Traditional medicine