CHAPTER 6: EVALUATION AND ASSESSMENT OF NON TIMBER FOREST PRODUCTS (NTFPS) WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO MISHING COMMUNITY

6.1 Introduction

Non-timber Forest Products (NTFPs) are objects of biological origin, both plants and animals, derived from the forests and allied land, uses for subsistence and cash income by forest dwellers. Tropical forests are considered to be important repositories of forest resources; especially NTFPs. Non-timber Forest Products have played a significant role in progressive growth in benefiting people and industries of a nation. Over thousands of year's human are collecting NTFPs for subsistence value and trade over. In recent decades, NTFPs obtained from plant resources, including seeds, flowers, fruits, leaves, roots, bark, latex, resins and other non-wood plant parts, have gained much attention in conservation circles [1]. Day- by-day the commercial trade of natural products, particularly plant medicines and crafts, is increasing in a huge manner and thus it is a major concern about overexploitation and threats to the valuable natural resources [2-10]. It was stated that around 4000 to 6000 non-timber plant species are of commercial importance world-wide [11, 12]. It has been estimated that Indian herbal industry collected more than 95% with about 400 plant species from wild populations that are used in the production of medicine, and is a huge concern for plant conservators [13]. Approx. 25 percent of 6.2 billion world population are dependent on forest resources including plant and animal products for their livelihood [14]. In a report it has been estimated that women

forest dwellers alone collect products worth about 700 million US dollars annually [15]. Indeed, NTFPs plays a very momentous role in rural economy in terms of providing employment, income potential and life sustenance [16]. The study on NTFPs has able to draw considerable attention throughout the country. But, the study of NTFPs in Assam shows negligible in comparison to other part of the India and North Eastern region in particular. Dattagupta et al. [17, 18] reported a study of NTFPs from Cachar district of Assam while, Sarma and Saikia [19] reported NTFPs from Majuli island and Khakhlari and Sarma [20] worked on NTFPs diversity from Garampani Wild Life Sanctuary, Karbi Anlong, Assam. To date, no systematic study has been carried out on potential utilization of NTFPs in Sonitpur district of Assam. And, no studies have been carried out related to ethnobotanical importance associated with Mishing community from this region. Therefore, an attempt has been made to carry out the exploration of NTFPs used by Mishing community in Sonitpur district of Assam.

6.2 Study area

The study was conducted in entire erstwhile Sonitpur district where Mishing community is inhibiting, touching its major market and villages. Numbers of weekly markets were visited and studied particularly in Mishing dominated areas mainly viz. Khonamukh, Dharikati, Hatigate, Charduwar, Bhalukpong, Miri gaon, Boka gaon, No. 1 Miri Pothar, Kekokoli Miri Gaon and Sonai Miri gaon.

6.3 Result and Discussion

During this study a total of 68 dicot plant species belonging to 57 genera under 42 families (Table 6.1) were recorded which are primarily used distinctly as NTFPs for different purposes by the community. Among the recorded species 28 species (42%) were trees, 22 species were shrubs (31%), 11 species were herbs (16%) and 7 species were climbers (11%). During the investigation, 132 peoples (82 males and 50 females) were interviewed in the market areas as well as in the house holds. Considering the age-groups, 48 respondents were of 32 – 45 years; 27 respondents of 46 – 55 years; 36 respondents of 56 – 65 years; 14 respondents of 66 – 75 years and only 7 respondents were 76 – 85 years old. Through the survey it has been estimated that majority of the NTFPs are collected and marketed by females.

It has been observed that Mishing community used NTFPs for medicine, edible fruits and vegetables, spice, fibre, gum/resins, insect repellent, rituals and traditional house makings. Sarma [21] mentioned that different forms of NTFPs are the integral parts of the day-to-day livelihood activity of tribal community particularly the Mishing community. The different plant parts collected as NTFPs are used for different purpose are also recorded during the study. Among them majority of the collected parts are used as medicine and vegetable (60%) followed by some parts are utilized as only vegetable (22%). Edible fruits composites about 8%, while mosquito repellent contributes about 3% and fibre and spice contain 2% and 1% respectively (Figure 6.1). it has also been estimated that leaves (48%) were most extensively collected, followed by fruit (30%), root (6%), resin/gum (5%), whole plant and seeds (3% each), tuber and flower contributes 2% and bark is the lowest collected product with about 1% of the total species (Figure 6.2). The Mishing community collects these NTFPs mainly for medical purpose and vegetables. The NTFPs collected from the forest are also marketed in different local markets by the community and is another important source of livelihood. Alexander [22] reported that 500 million peoples living in and around the forest depends on them for meeting the socioeconomic livelihood needs. In this investigation the market prices of each marketed items is also recorded with the seasons of availability.

Sl. No.	Botanical name	Family	Vernacular name	Habit	Part used	Importance /Values	Approx. Local market value (Rs.) (if marketed)	Seasons /Availability
1.	Acacia nilotica (L.)	Mimosaceae	Babul	Т	Leaf,	Medicinal	Not sold	Whole year
	Delile				bark			
2.	Adhatoda vasica Nees	Acanthaceae	Bahek phul	SH	Leaf	Medicine	10/1 bundle	Whole year
3.	Aegle marmelos (L.)	Rutaceae	Bel	Т	Fruit	Medicine/	5/ pc	Mar-June
	Correa					Juice		
4.	Alternanthera	Amaranthaceae		Н	Leaf	Vegetable	10/1 bundle	Whole year
	philoxeroides Griseb.							
5.	Alternanthera sessilis	Amaranthaceae	Morisha	SH	Leaf	Vegetable	10/1 bundle	Whole year
	(L.) R. Brown ex DC.							
6.	Amaranthus spinosus	Amaranthaceae	Geyag	SH	Leaf	Vegetable	10/1 bundle	Whole year

Table 6.1: List of plant species collected by the Mishing community as NTFPs. Abbreviation used: CL- Climber; H-Herb; SH-Shrub; T-Tree

	L.				with			
					stem			
7.	Amaranthus virdis L.	Amaranthaceae	Datha	SH	Leaf	Vegetable	10/1 bundle	Whole year
					with			
					stem			
8.	Ananas comosus (L.)	Annonaceae	Matikothal	SH	Leaf	Medicinal/	20/1 pair	
	Merr.					Vegetable		
9.	Andrographis	Acanthaceae	Kalmegh	SH	Leaf	Medicinal/	Not sold	Whole year
	<i>paniculata</i> (Burm. f.)					Vegetable		
	Nees							
10.	Anisomeles	Lamiaceae		SH	Leaf	Vegetable	15/1 bundle	Whole year
	malabarica (L.)R. Br.							
11.	Antidesma acidum	Euphorbiaceae		SH	Leaf	Vegetable	12-15/1	Whole year
	Retz.						bundle	
12.	Artocarpus lacucha	Moraceae		Т	Fruit	Edible fruit	25/kg	Jun-August
	BuchHam.							

13.	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i> Willd.	Asperagaceae	Satmul	CL	Root	Medicinal/ Vegetable	Not sold	Whole year
14.	Averrhoa carambola L.	Averrhoeaceae	Kordoi	Т	Fruit	Medicinal/ Vegetable	20/ kg	
15.	<i>Baccaurea sapida</i> (Roxb.) MuellArg.	Euphorbiac	Buri aaye	Т	Fruit	Edible fruit	5-7/ dozen	May- Oct
16.	<i>Bacopa monnieri</i> (L.) Wettst.	Scrophulariaceae	Brahmi	Н	Whole plant	Medicinal/ Vegetable	10/bundle	Round the year
17.	Bombax ceiba L.	Bombacaceae	Simal	Т	Capsule	Non Edible Used white fibre	100-120/kg	March-May
18.	<i>Boswellia serrata</i> Roxburgh ex Colebrook	Burseraceae	Dhuna	Т	Resin	Mosquito repellent	56-60/ kg	Whole year
19.	Bryophyllum pinnatum	Crassulaceae	Duportenga	Н	Leaf	Medicinal/	Not sold	Whole year

(Lam.) Oken					Vegetable		
Butea monosperma	Papilionaceae	Palas	Т	Gum/	Medicinal	Not sold	Whole year
(Lam.) Taub				resin			
Centella asiatica	Apiaceae	Manimuni	Н	Whole	Medicinal/	Not sold	Whole year
(L.)Urban.				plant	Vegetable		
Chenopodium album	Chenopodiaceae	Jilmli	Н	Leaf	Vegetable	5/bundle	Whole year
L.							
Citrus maxima (J.	Rutaceae	Sinkin	Т	Fruit	Edible fruit	5/fruit	May-Aug.
Burman) Merr.							
Clerodendron	Verbenaceae	Pakkom	SH	Leaf	Medicinal/	Not sold	Whole year
colebrokianum L.					Vegetable		
Clerodendrum	Verbenaceae	Pakkom	SH	Leaf	Medicinal/	Not sold	Whole year
infortunatum L.					Vegetable		
<i>Cuscuta reflexa</i> Roxb.	Cascutaceae	Rabonlota	CL	Root	Medicinal	Not sold	Whole year
Datura stramonium L.	Solanaceae	Dhatura	SH	Root	Medicinal	Not sold	Whole year
	Butea monosperma (Lam.) Taub Centella asiatica (L.)Urban. Chenopodium album L. Citrus maxima (J. Burman) Merr. Clerodendron colebrokianum L. Clerodendrum infortunatum L. Cuscuta reflexa Roxb.	Rutea monospermaPapilionaceaeRutaa monospermaPapilionaceae(Lam.) TaubApiaceaeCentella asiaticaApiaceae(L.)Urban.ChenopodiaceaeL.ChenopodiaceaeL.RutaceaeBurman) Merr.VerbenaceaeClerodendronVerbenaceaecolebrokianum L.Verbenaceaeinfortunatum L.Cascutaceae	Butea monospermaPapilionaceaePalasButea monospermaPapilionaceaePalas(Lam.) TaubApiaceaeManimuniCentella asiaticaApiaceaeManimuni(L.)Urban.ChenopodiaceaeJilmliL.ChenopodiaceaeJilmliL.RutaceaeSinkinBurman) Merr.VerbenaceaePakkomClerodendronVerbenaceaePakkomcolebrokianum L.VerbenaceaeRakominfortunatum L.CascutaceaeRabonlota	Butea monospermaPapilionaceaePalasTButea monospermaPapilionaceaePalasT(Lam.) TaubApiaceaeManimuniHCentella asiaticaApiaceaeManimuniH(L.)Urban.ChenopodiaceaeJilmliHL.ChenopodiaceaeJilmliTCitrus maxima (J.RutaceaeSinkinTBurman) Merr.VerbenaceaePakkomSHClerodendronVerbenaceaePakkomSHcolebrokianum L.VerbenaceaePakkomSHinfortunatum L.CascutaceaeRabonlotaCL	Butea monospermaPapilionaceaePalasTGum/ resin(Lam.) Taub<	Rutea monospermaPapilionaceaePalasTGum/Medicinal(Lam.) TaubTApiaceaeManimuniHWholeMedicinal/(Lam.) TaubApiaceaeManimuniHWholeMedicinal/(L.) Urban.TTImage and the second a	Butea monospermaPapilionaceaePalasTGum/ resinMedicinalNot sold(Lam.) Taub<

28.	Dendrocnide sinuata	Urticaceae	Sorat	SH	Flower	Vegetable	30-50/	Oct-Jan
	(Bl.) Chew						500gm	
29.	Dillenia indica L.	Dilleniaceae	Sampa	Т	Fruit	Vegetable	5-7/pair	Whole year
30.	Dioscorea alata L.	Dioscoreaceae	Nimti	CL	Tuberou s root	Vegetable	20-25/ kg	Whole yea
31.	Drymaria cordata (L.)	Caryophyllaceae	Laijabori	Н	Leaf	Medicinal	Not sold	Whole yea
	Willd. ex Schult.							
32.	Elaeocarpus	Elaeocarpaceae	Omora	Т	Fruit	Medicine /	20/kg	Apr- July
	floribundus Blume					Vegetable		
33.	Eupatorium odoratum	Asteraceae	Ayapan	SH	Leaf/	Medicinal	Not sold	Whole yea
	L.				root			
34.	<i>Ficus glomerata</i> Roxb.	Moraceae	Tejing	Т	Leaf	Medicinal/	20/kg	Whole yea
			/taksek			Vegetable		
35.	Ficus hirta Vahl	Moraceae	Taksek	Т	Fruit	Medicinal/	20/kg	Whole yea
						Vegetable		

36.	Flemingia strobilifera	Papilionaceae	Makhioti	SH	Leaf	Mosquito	10/ bunch	April
	(L.) W.T.Aiton					Repellent		
						/Rituals		
37.	<i>Garcinia cowa</i> Roxb. ex DC.	Clusiaceae	Thekera	Т	Fruit	Vegetable	10/ fruit	Jul- Oct
38.	Garcinia paniculata	Clusiaceae	Tepor	Т	Fruit	Vegetable	10/ fruit	Jul- Oct
	Roxb.		tenga					
39.	Hedyotis diffusa Willd.	Rubiaceae	Sarpajiva	Н	Leaf	Medicinal/	Not sold	Whole yea
						Vegetable		
40.	Hibiscus rosa-sinensis	Malvaceae	Leunaapu	Т	Leaf	Medicinal/	Not sold	Whole yea
	L.		m			Vegetable		
41.	Jatropha curcas L.	Euphorbiaceae	Votera	Т	Resin	Medicinal/	Not sold	Whole yea
						Vegetable		
42.	Justicia adhatoda L.	Acanthaceae	Bahaka	SH	Leaf	Medicinal/	Not sold	Whole yea
						Vegetable		
43.	Leucas aspera (Willd.)	Lamiaceae	Durum	Н	Leaf	Medicinal/	5/bundle	Whole yea
						Vegetable		

	Link							
44.	Lippia javanica	Verbenaceae	Pixas bon	Н	Leaf/	Medicinal	Not sold	Whole year
	(Burm.f.) Spreng.				flower/			
					stem			
45.	Mangifera indica L.	Anacardiaceae	Aam	Т	Fruit	Eaten	30-40/ kg	May- Sep
						Directly		
46.	Moringa oleifera Lam.	Moringaceae	Munga	Т	Fruit/flo	Medicinal/	60/kg	Feb-Apr
					wer/leaf	Vegetable		
47.	Murraya koenigii (L.)	Rutaceae	Narasingha	SH	Leaf	Vegetable	5/ bundle	Whole year
	Spreg.							
48.	Nyctenthis arbor-	Oleaceae	Sewali	Т	Flower	Medicinal/	30/500gm	Oct-Nov
	tristis L.					Vegetable		
49.	Ocimum basilicum L.	Lamiaceae	Tulsi	SH	Leaf	Medicinal/	Not sold	Whole year
						Vegetable		
50.	Paederia foetida L.	Rubiaceae	Bunka fore	CL	Leaf	Vegetable/	10/ bundle	Whole year
						Medicine		

51.	Phyllanthus acidus (L.)	Phyllanthaceae	Pomlokhi	Т	Fruit	Eaten	15-20/ kg	Sep – Nov
	Skeels		/Pora –			Directly		
			aamlokhi					
52.	Piper longum L.	Piperaceae	Pipli	CL	Fruit	Medicine /	20-30/	Whole year
						Spice	100gm	
53.	Polygonum hydropiper	Polygonaceae	Leubo	Η	Leaf/	Medicinal/	5/bundle	
	L.				stem	Vegetable		
54.	Polygonum	Polygonaceae	Nekungkune	Η	Leaf	Medicinal	Not sold	Whole year
	microcephalum D.							
	Don							
55.	Psidium guajava L	Myrtaceae	Madhuri	Т	Leaf	Medicinal/	30/kg	Whole year
						Vegetable		
56.	Punica granatum L	Punicaceae	Anar	SH	Leaf/	Medicinal/	40/ pair	Jan- Aug
					flower/	Vegetable		
					fruit			
57.	Scoparia dulcis L.	Plantaginaceae	Tisilkosa	SH	Leaf	Medicinal/	Not sold	Whole year

						Vegetable		
58.	Solanum indicum L.	Solanaceae	Banko	SH	Leaf	Medicinal/	15/500gm	Whole year
						Vegetable		
59.	Solanum nigrum L.	Solanaceae	Bangko	SH	Fruit	Vegetable	10/250 gm	Whole year
60 .	Solanum torvum Sw	Solanaceae	Sitabanko	SH	Fruit	Medicinal/ Vegetable	20/250gm	Almost whole year
51 .	<i>Syzygium cumini</i> (L.) Skeels	Myrtaceae	Jamun	Т	Fruit	Eaten Directly	30-35/ kg	June-Sep
52.	<i>Syzygium jambos</i> (L.) Alston	Myrtaceae	Jamun	Т	Fruit	Eaten Directly	30-35/ kg	June-Sep
53.	<i>Terminali chebula</i> Retz.	Combretaceae	Silika	Т	Fruit	Medicinal/ Vegetable	30-40/ kg	Feb-Mar
64 .	<i>Terminalia arjuna</i> (Roxb. ex DC.) Wight. & Arn.	Combretaceae	Arjun	Т	Bark	Medicine	20/kg	Whole year

65.	<i>Terminalia bellirica</i> (Gaert.) Rox.	Combretaceae	Bhomora	Т	Fruit	Medicine	20/kg	Jul-Dec
66.	Tinospora cordifolia (Willd.) Miers	Menispermaceae	Amrita	CL	Leaf	Medicinal	Not sold	Whole year
67.	<i>Tylophora indica</i> (Burm, f.)Merr.	Asclepiadaceae	Anantamul	CL	Root	Medicinal/ Vegetable	Not sold	
68.	<i>Ziziphus jujuba</i> P.Miller	Rhamnaceae	Bon bogori	Т	Fruit	Fruit /Pickle	15/ kg	Jan-April

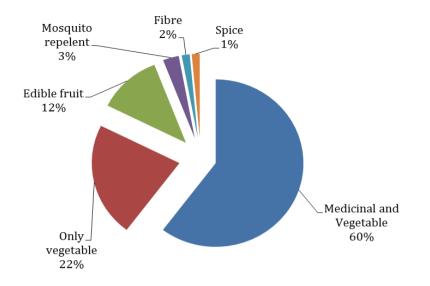


Figure 6.1: Percentage of utilization of different NTFPs collected

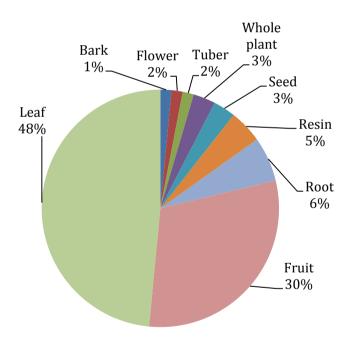


Figure 6.2: Percentage composition of different plant parts of collected as NTFPs by Mishing community.

6.4 Different plant parts used by the community as NTFPs

6.4.1 Edible leaves

Leaves are the major plant parts (48%) that are collected by the community for different purposes as NTFP. The edible leaves are collected from - Adhatoda vasica Nees, Alternanthera Philoxeroides Griseb., Alternanthera sessilis (L.) R. Brown ex DC., Amaranthus spinosus L., Amaranthus viridis L., Ananas comosus (L.) Merr., Andrographis paniculata (Burm. f.) Nees, Anisomeles malabarica (L.)R. Br., Antidesma acidum Retz., Bryophyllum pinnatum (Lam.) Oken, Chenopodium album L., Clerodendron colebrokianum L., Clerodendrum infortunatum L., Drymaria cordata (L.) Willd. ex Schult., Ficus glomerata Roxb., Hedyotis diffusa Willd., Hibiscus rosa-sinensis L., Justicia adhatoda L., Leucas aspera (Willd.) Link, Murraya koenigii (L.) Spreg., Ocimum basilicum L., Paederia foetida L., Polygonum microcephalum D. Don, Psidium guajava L., Scoparia dulcis L., Solanum indicum L., Tinospora cordifolia (Willd.) Miers, Amaranthus spinosus L., Amaranthus virdis L., Acacia nilotica (L.) Delile, *Punica granatum* L. and *Lippia javanica* (Burm. f.) Spreng.

6.4.2 Edible fruits

From the recorded data it has been observed that the Mishing community collects numbers of fruits from different plant species for edible purposes which contribute about 30% of total recorded taxa under NTFPs. A total number of 21 species viz. *Aegle marmelos* (L.) Correa, *Artocarpus lacucha* Buch.-Ham., *Averrhoa*

carambola L., Baccaurea sapida (Roxb.) Muell.-Arg., Citrus maxima (J. Burman) Merr., Dillenia indica L., Elaeocarpus floribundus Blume, Ficus hirta Vahl, Garcinia cowa Roxb. ex DC., Garcinia paniculata Roxb., Mangifera indica L. Moringa oleifera Lam., Phyllanthus acidus (L.) Skeels, Piper longum L., Solanum nigrum L., Solanum torvum Sw, Syzygium cumini (L.) Skeels, Syzygium jambos (L.) Alston, Terminali chebula Retz., Terminalia bellirica (Gaert.) Roxb. and Ziziphus jujuba P.Miller are recorded.

6.4.3 Other edible parts

Flower: Dendrocnide sinuata (Bl.) Chew and Nyctenthis arbortristis L.; Roots: Cuscuta reflexa Roxb., Datura stramonium L., Asparagus racemosus Willd., Tylophora indica (Burm,f.)Merr.; Whole plant: Bacopa monnieri (L.) Wettst. and Centella asiatica (L.)Urban.; Tuberous Root: Dioscorea alata L.; Resin: Butea monosperma (Lam.) Taub; Bark: Terminalia arjuna (Roxb. ex DC.) Wight. & Arn.

6.4.4 Non-edible plant parts collected for different purposes

There are some non-edible plants parts collected from the forests for different purposes, which are viz. **Resin:** *Boswellia serrata* Roxb. ex Colebr.; **Capsule:** *Bombax ceiba* L.; **Leaf:** *Flemingia strobilifera* (L.) W.T. Aiton

6.5 Conclusion

Several studies reported that NTFPs plays significant role in the livelihood pattern of tribal community living in the adjacent areas of different forests [23-25]. From the current study it is very clear that the Mishing community inhibited in forest areas are dependent upon NTFPs for their sustenance. During the present it has been found that study 68 species are used as NTFPs for different purposes by the Mishing community and considerable amount of NTFPs are collected for their cash income and marketed. It has been observed that the majority of the NTFPs were collected throughout the year and supporting their major socio-economic conditions. Through conversation with individuals of different age groups it has also been noticed that the traditional knowledge on the use of different NTFPs among the youth is been decreasing. Numbers of vendors also expressed that the forest resources are depleting day by day which induced exploitation of valuable forest resources beyond their sustainable limit and is also ascribed to the loss of forest habitat due to several anthropogenic activities. Overall, the forest resources ensure the need of socioeconomic and ecological safety of peoples living in forests and nearby areas. It has been established that the livelihood and socioeconomic conditions of Mishing community largely rely upon NTFPs to fulfil their food and other domestic needs and even for their cash income. However, there is a need of future study to quantify the amount of extracted forest products and degree of dependency on NTFPs as a source of income. Availability and harvesting of NTFPs for sustainable livelihood of the community and ecological balance for near future also need to examine.

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