



कृण्वन्तो विश्वमार्यम् ।

Plant sentience - in relation to spiritually positive stimuli

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Abstract

Spiritual Research Centre and Ashram in Goa, India has been known to have high levels of spiritual positivity due to the presence of Saints and seekers of Spirituality residing on its premises. The spontaneous growth of over 200 Audumbar (Holy fig) trees on the premises of the Spiritual Research Centre and Ashram prompted the spiritual research team to compare them with other Audumbar trees in the same vicinity. Using an aura and energy scanning device, it was found that the positive aura of Audumbar trees in the Ashram premises was far greater than those outside its premises even though the soil and physical conditions they were exposed to were similar. The experiment indicated that the Audumbar tree is able to sense and respond to the heightened positive spiritual vibrations present in the Ashram. This is also reflected by the relatively high density of the Audumbar saplings or trees within the ashram premises as compared to outside the Ashram. Similar experiments conducted on a Tulsi plant showed that its subtle energy and aura increased positively in response to various spiritually positive stimuli that included the Ashram environment, spiritual rituals and being tended to by a Saint. Due to the various positive stimuli, over a period of 37 days, the Tulsi plant's aura recorded an increase in distance of 170% from the time it was first brought into the Spiritual Research Centre and Ashram. These experiments among many others demonstrate the innate cognitive ability and sentience in plants to respond to spiritually positive vibrations.

252 words

Keywords : Audumbar, Tulsi, Aura of plants, Spiritually positive vibrations, Sentience in plants

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1 Introduction

The Spiritual Research Centre and Ashram is located in forested land in the heart of Goa, India. Nestled between two renowned temples in Goa, the Spiritual Research Centre and Ashram is home to approximately 500 seekers who are practising Spirituality. Along with practising Spirituality, seekers live a spiritually purer (*sāttvik*) way of life, for example, no non-vegetarian food is cooked or consumed in the Ashram premises. At any given time, approximately 10 to 15 Saints reside at the Spiritual Research Centre and Ashram. Over the years, many Saints and researchers have visited the premises of the Spiritual Research Centre and Ashram and have remarked on the high level of spiritually positive vibrations they have felt. One Saint who was of a higher spiritual level called the Ashram 'a temple', thus comparing it to a place of worship.

At the Spiritual Research Centre and Ashram, many experiments have been conducted to understand how the spiritually positive vibrations of the premises affect people, animals, plants and even non-living things in a positive manner. In this document, the aspect of cognition and sentience in plants is discussed in relation to how they respond to spiritually positive vibrations in the environment.

2 Audumbar trees and the Spiritual Research Centre and Ashram

Even though there has been no active planting of saplings of the Audumbar tree (Udumbara or the Holy-Fig tree) on the premises of the Spiritual Research Centre and Ashram, there are over 200 such plants on the premises.

2.1 The Audumbar Plant Phenomenon

On 17-Sep-2015, as per the guidance of a Saint of a higher level, seekers in the Spiritual Research Centre and Ashram began to recite the *Dattamala mantra*. The purpose of this recitation was to invoke the blessings and spiritual protection of Deity Dattatreya. One of the functions of Deity Dattatreya is to provide protection from problems due to departed ancestral spirits. Over 20 seekers at a time would recite the *Dattamala mantra* in Sanskrit in the temple room of the Ashram - 24 times during each 1.5-hour session. In the initial months, there were 3 such sessions conducted daily - in the morning, afternoon and evening. In recent months, as of Sep 2016, only 1 session is being conducted daily.

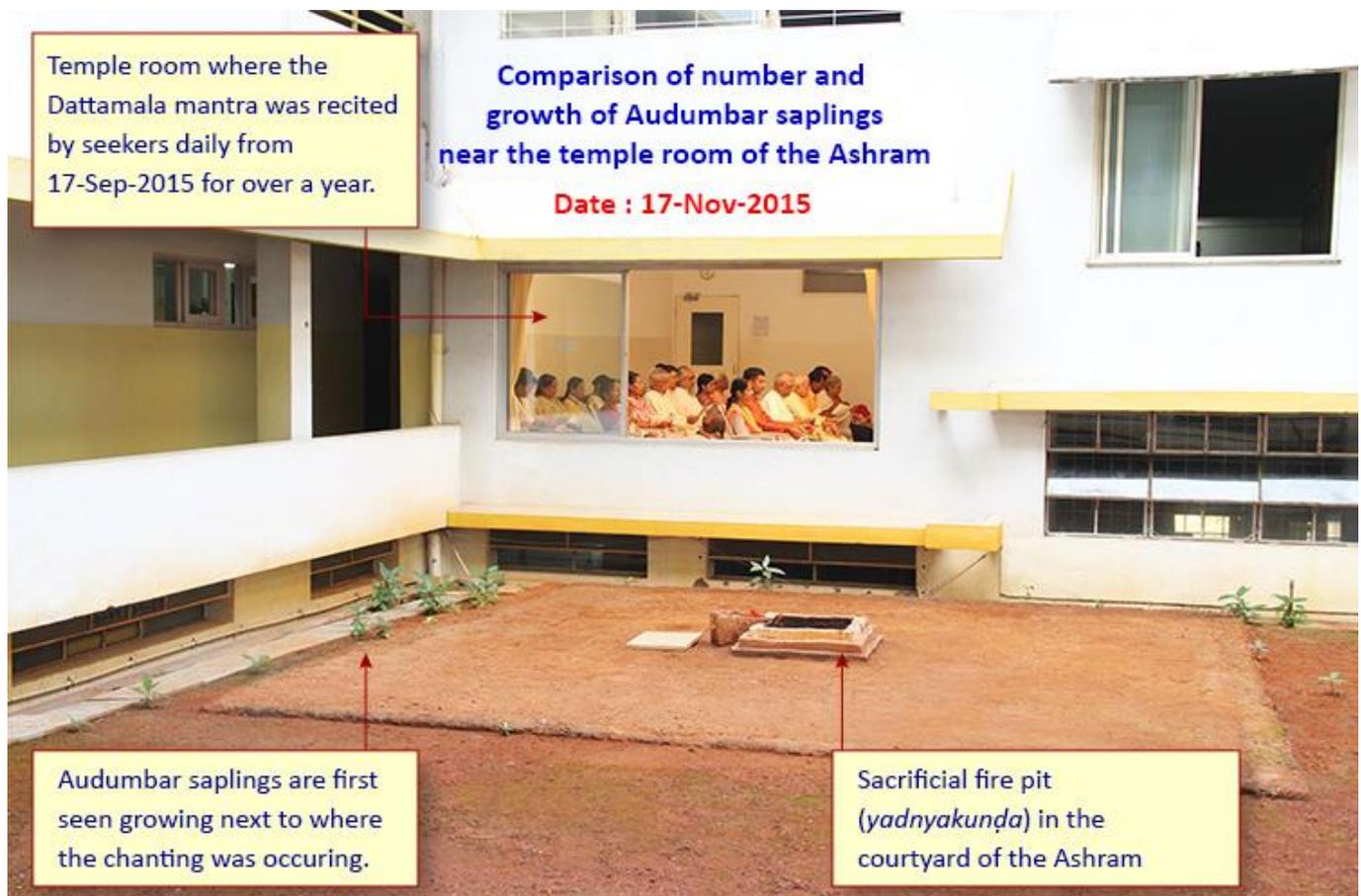
Within a couple of months after the chanting began (on 17-Sep-2015), in Nov 2015, it was observed that some plants began to sprout all along the perimeter of the Ashram courtyard. Maximum number of plants were seen just near the temple room where the chanting sessions were going on.

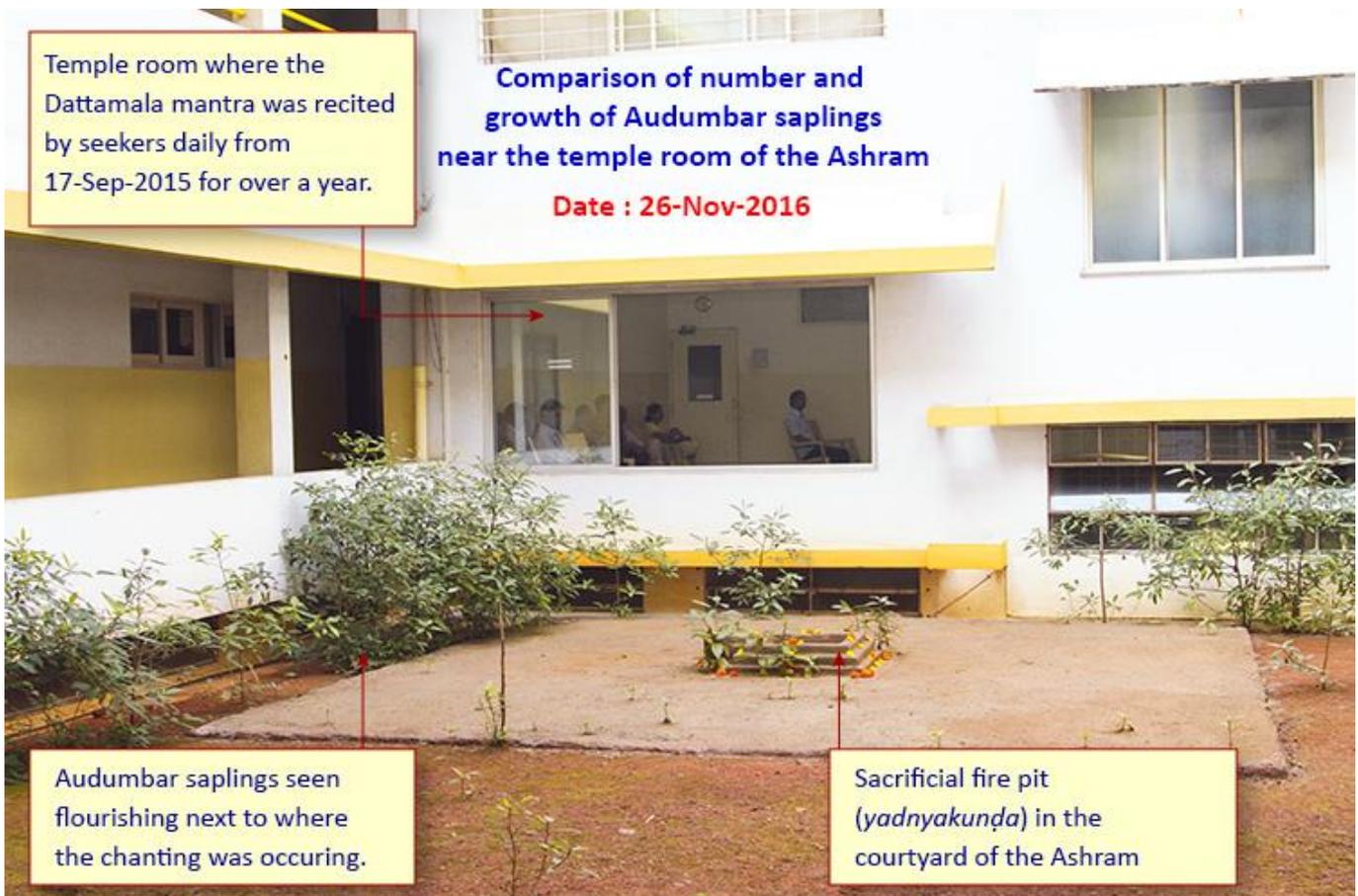
Please note these saplings were not planted by any person, and to the best of the knowledge of the research team, they had grown spontaneously.

Dr Ajay Joshi a resident veterinarian (who is also a seeker) identified the saplings as *Ficus Racemosa* locally known as Audumbar (Udumbara) or the Holy-Fig tree. According to Hindu culture and as mentioned in the Holy text Shree Gurucharitra, this tree is considered Holy and is closely related to Deity Dattatreya (Gangadhar Sakhare, 15th Century). Thus, it is common to see the Audumbar tree near Deity Dattatreya's temples. The plant is also known to have many natural healing properties (Hebbar, 2016).

The fig is actually a cluster of flowers, covered by globular skin. The flowers of the Audumbar tree are pollinated by certain wasps, which enter the fig fruit to lay eggs. Apart from stem cuttings, their main way of propagation is when birds eat the fruit of the Audumbar and the seeds are then dispersed through birds' droppings (Kalbag, 2016).

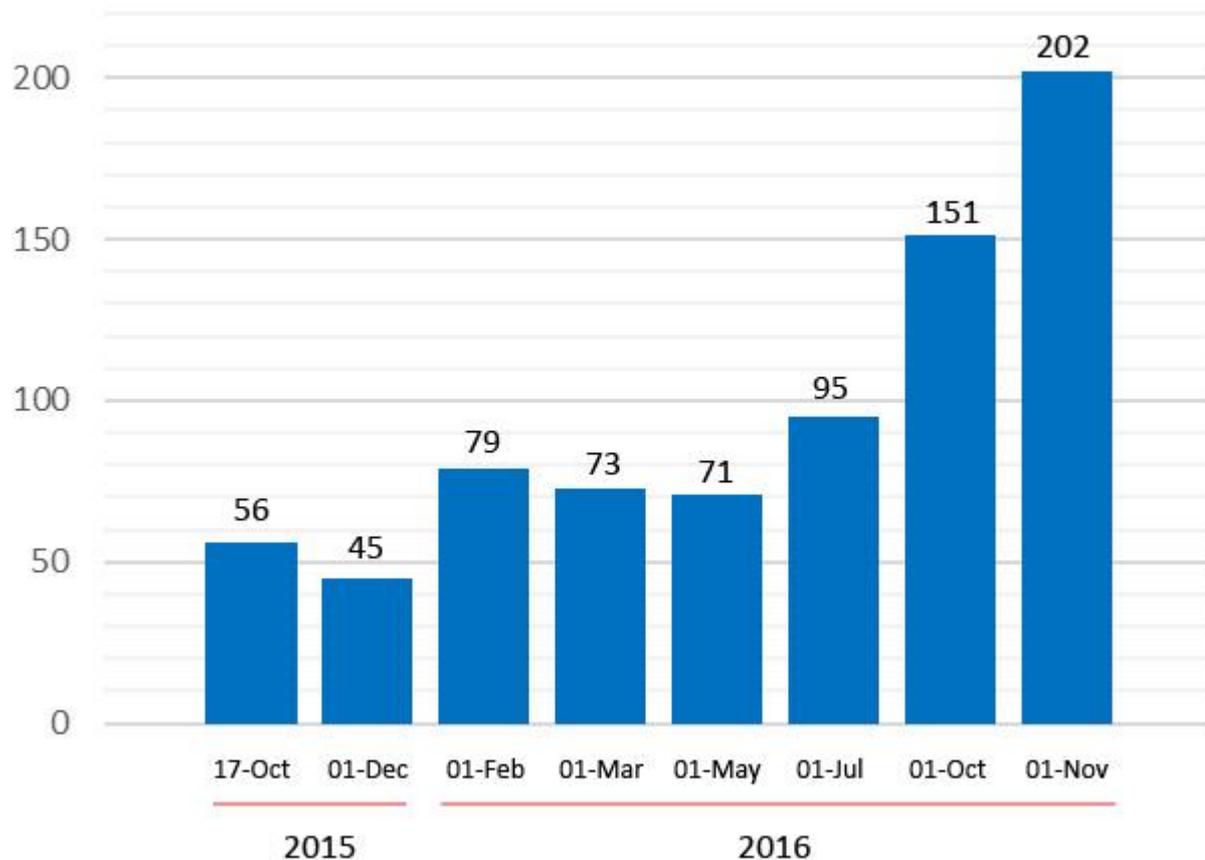
This is a picture of the courtyard just outside the Ashram temple room. The following two pictures show the difference between the number of saplings observed and how they have grown from the early stages in Nov 2015 to Nov 2016.





At first, it was observed that the plants grew only along the perimeter of the internal courtyard of the Ashram. Maximum concentration of the plants was just outside the temple room wall at the corner of the courtyard where the recitation of the *mantra* was taking place. With time, more Audumbar plants were seen sprouting on the northern and eastern areas too. Yet for many months, very few Audumbar plants were noticed on the southern side of the courtyard. Then in September 2016, we saw a sudden spurt of Audumbar saplings growing on the southern side. In the chart below, we have documented this unusually high growth rate of the Audumbar plants as they sprouted all over the courtyard in 2015-2016.

Number of Audumbar plants observed in the courtyard of the Spiritual Research Centre and Ashram



- It is important to stress that no attempt was made by the Ashram seekers to plant any of the Audumbar saplings seen in the photos above. To the best of the knowledge of the spiritual research team, the saplings sprouted on their own. This is even though the soil in the courtyard is not considered to be fertile. Also, no extra soil was laid out during this period.
- Historically since the establishment of the Ashram building in 2005, no plants have been seen growing in the quadrangle. The whole quadrangle is cordoned off by 4 floors and has a deep foundation. Birds are rarely seen in the enclosed courtyard and it is not easily accessible to them.
- It is highly unlikely that birds decided to lay their droppings neatly along the perimeter of the Ashram courtyard concentrating just near the temple room. Also, there are eaves over each floor. If the birds' dropping theory had any weight, then at least some droppings would have been seen on the eaves. However, no birds' droppings have been seen anywhere on the eaves.
- The appearance and flourishing of these Audumbar plants have coincided with the chanting of the *Dattamala mantra*. It can be stated that the recitation of the *Dattamala mantra* is perhaps the only known change before and after the observation of this unique phenomenon.
- The interesting and intriguing fact is that only Audumbar saplings have been seen to be growing in the Ashram courtyard during this period and no other type of plants. Also, apart from the Ashram courtyard, no new Audumbar saplings were seen growing elsewhere on the Ashram premises. Given

that there has been no active planting of these Audumbar saplings, it is quite remarkable how they have flourished.

While the spontaneous growth of 202 Audumbar plants in the Ashram courtyard defies rationale thought, there is a strong co-relation in timing between the chanting of *mantras* related to Deity Dattatreya and the growth of these plants. Is it possible that *mantras* in Sanskrit can bring about the growth of plants ? Further research into this event can shed light on the intricacies of how plants respond to the spiritual energy generated by *mantras*.

2.2 The effect of the Ashram premises on Audumbar trees

Apart from the 202 Audumbar saplings growing in the Ashram courtyard, there are quite a few Audumbar trees growing on the Ashram premises. None of the saplings/trees have been planted. They have all grown spontaneously. From a spiritual perspective, the environment was highly conducive for the growth of the Audumbar plants in the ashram courtyard. As per the understanding of the spiritual research team at the Ashram this is due to the following reasons.

1. The chanting of the *Dattamala mantra* in Sanskrit was guided by a Saint of the highest order and had His blessings. This heightened the power of the *Dattamala mantra*.
2. The devotion of seekers act as a magnet in invoking the blessings of the Deity associated with the *mantra*.
3. There is a spiritual rule that states, 'The word, touch, form, taste, smell and its related energy coexist'. The inbuilt spiritual power of the *Dattamala mantra* in Sanskrit generated vibrations of the Dattatreya Principle. These vibrations are most conducive for the propagation and growth of the Audumbar tree as its vibrations closely match the Dattatreya Principle.

While the above points explain the conducive nature of the environment for the growth of Audumbar trees, it is unclear as to what was the catalyst for growth. Was it just nature or Divine intervention ? More research into this aspect of the phenomenon is required. However, the extraordinary and spontaneous growth of Audumbar trees in the Ashram premises (both inside the courtyard and outside) prompted the question whether they had any speciality when compared with other Audumbar trees in the vicinity.

For this experiment, a Universal Thermo Scanner (UTS) was used. It is an aura and energy scanning device developed by Dr Mannem Murthy, a former nuclear scientist. The instrument measures the subtle energy (positive and negative) and the aura around any object (living or non-living) (Murthy, 2017).

A sample of six trees were chosen to be a part of the experiment; 3 outside the Ashram premises and 3 inside the Ashram premises. The locations of the trees have been marked in the aerial picture below where serial numbers 1 to 3 represent the placement of the trees outside the Ashram. Serial numbers 4 to 6 represent trees within the Ashram premises. All Audumbar trees chosen for the experiment were located in a similar forested environment within 700 metres from each other.



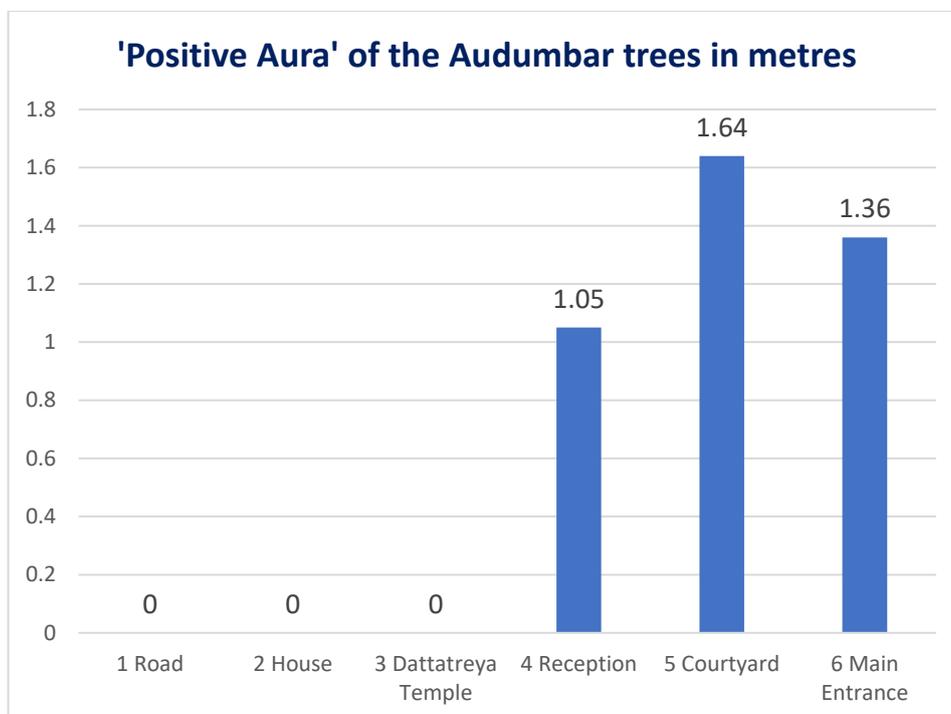
Legend

No.	Description of location of Audumbar trees outside (the Ashram premises)	No.	Description of location of Audumbar trees inside (the Ashram premises)
1.	Tree at the side of the road	4.	Tree in front of the Ashram reception
2.	Tree next to a house in a village	5.	Tree on the North side of the courtyard
3.	Tree next to a temple of Deity Dattatreya	6.	Tree at the entrance of the Ashram facing the residential quarters of His Holiness Dr Athavale

Key observations :

Positive energy

The following chart shows the distance **in metres** of the various 'positive auras' recorded by the UTS from the 6 Audumbar trees measured in the experiment.



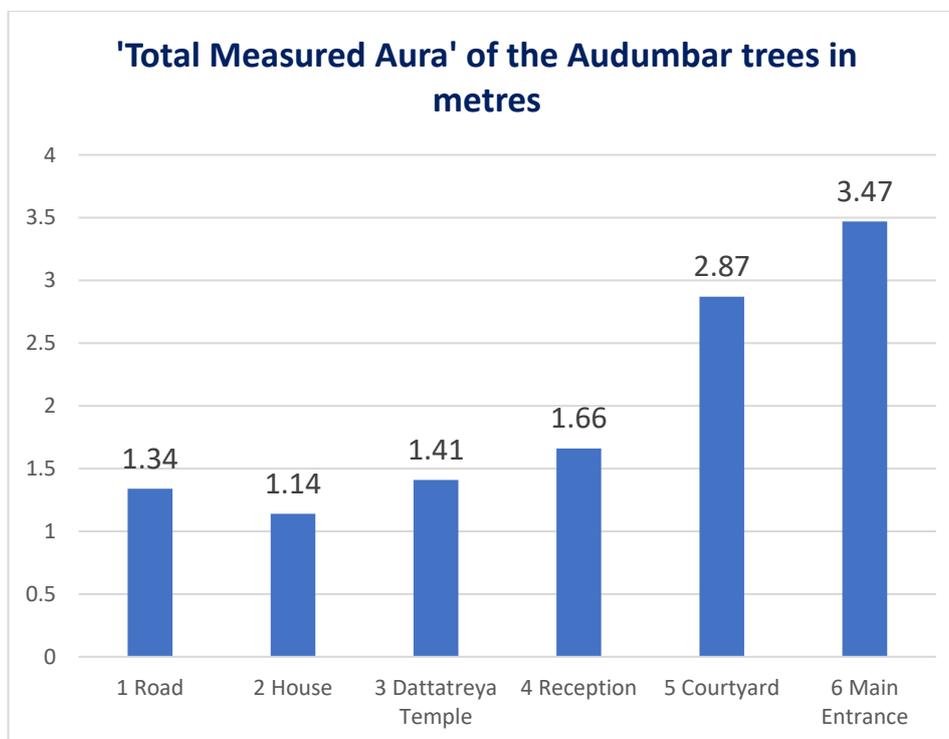
- While there was some positive energy recorded from the tree at the Dattatreya temple (3), it was not enough to measure its aura.
- All trees in the Ashram premises (4,5 & 6) showed a positive aura. The tree in the courtyard (5), which was one of the 202 Audumbar trees that grew spontaneously during the chanting of the *mantras*, recorded the maximum positive aura.

Negative energy

- The Audumbar trees on the road (1) and the village house (2) showed signs of some negative subtle energy.

Total measured aura

The following chart shows the distance **in metres** of the various 'total measured auras' recorded from the 6 Audumbar trees.



- The total measured aura of the Audumbar trees within the Spiritual Research Centre and Ashram premises were all greater than the trees outside the Ashram premises.
- Among the trees outside, the tree at the side of the Dattatreya temple (3) recorded the higher total measured aura.
- In the Ashram, it was the tree at the entrance facing the room of His Holiness Dr Athavale that recorded the highest total measured aura of 3.47 metres.

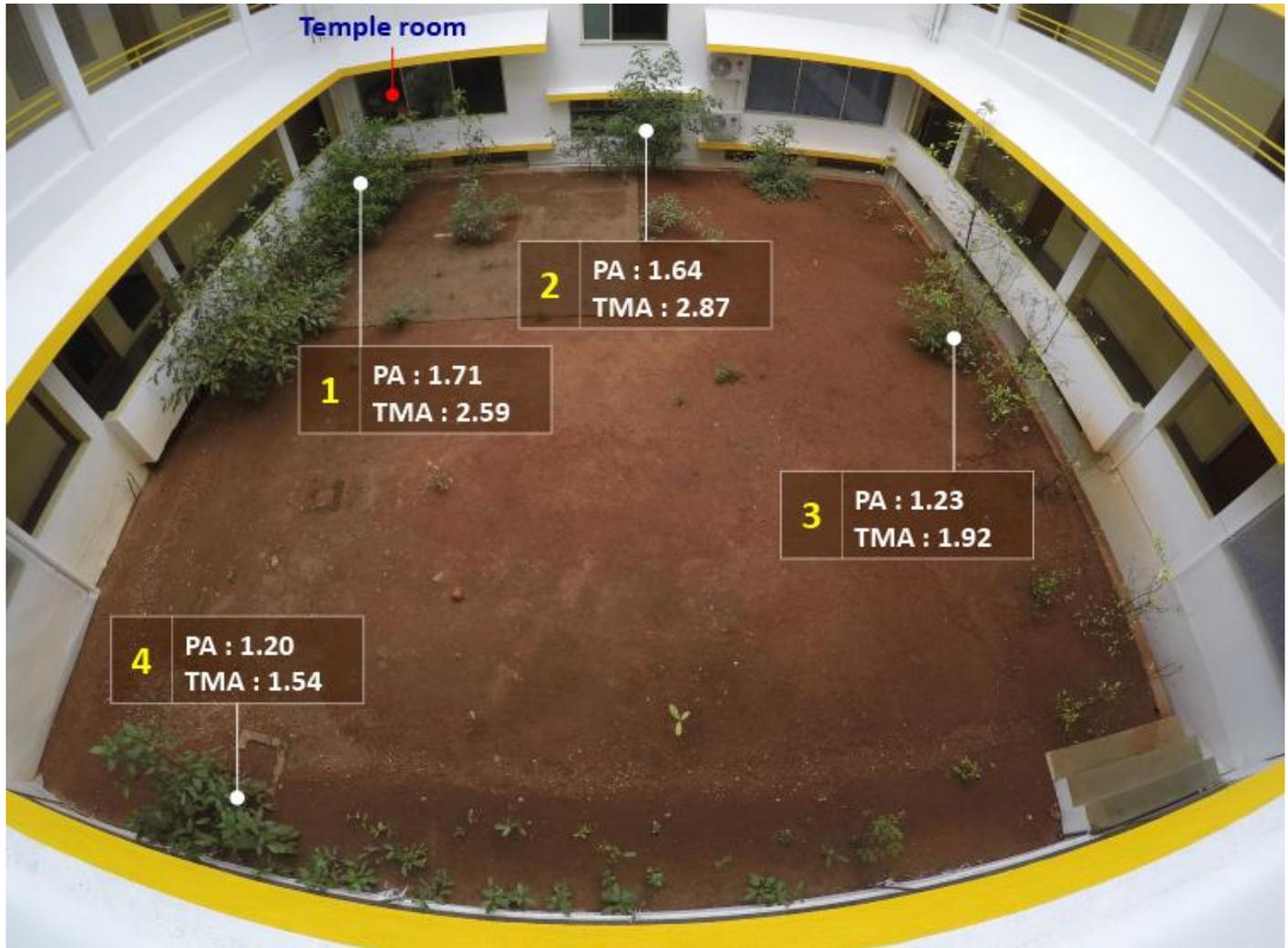
Conclusions and analysis :

- This experiment shows that the Audumbar tree responds to a spiritually positive environment. Among the trees outside the Ashram premises, the Audumbar tree at Deity Dattatreya temple had the highest levels of spiritual purity and the total measured aura.
- The size of the tree at the Dattatreya temple is over eight metres. Compared with this, the sapling in the Ashram courtyard is only 2 metres tall, yet the aura that it emitted was double that of the significantly larger tree at the Dattatreya temple. This shows that the size of the tree is not necessarily related to the positivity it can absorb and emit. Accordingly, it shows that plant sentience in relation to harnessing the benefit of a spiritually positive environment does not necessarily depend on the size or age of the tree. For the same species of plants, the strength of positivity/negativity that they are exposed to is arguably the main criteria to determine the type of aura (positive/negative) that they will have.

2.3 The effect of distance from the positive stimulus on Audumbar plants in the Ashram courtyard

Using the UTS, readings of a sample of 4 Audumbar plants (in the Ashram courtyard) at various distances from the temple room were taken. In the picture below, the readings of the plants have been mapped in relation to their position from the temple room.

Please note in the picture below : PA means 'Positive Aura' and TMA means 'Total Measured Aura'.



Observations :

- None of the saplings in the sample measured had any negative vibrations.
- The readings showed that the saplings closer to the temple room had higher levels of positivity and larger auras.
- As their distance from the temple room increased, their positivity reduced.

Conclusions and analysis :

- The spiritual positivity of the temple room along with the *mantras* that were recited were imbibed by the Audumbar plants.
- It shows the cognitive ability and sentience of plants such as the Audumbar to respond positively to the spiritually positive stimulus of the temple room and chanting of some *mantras*.

3 Effect of a Saint on a Tulsi plant

Background of the experiment :

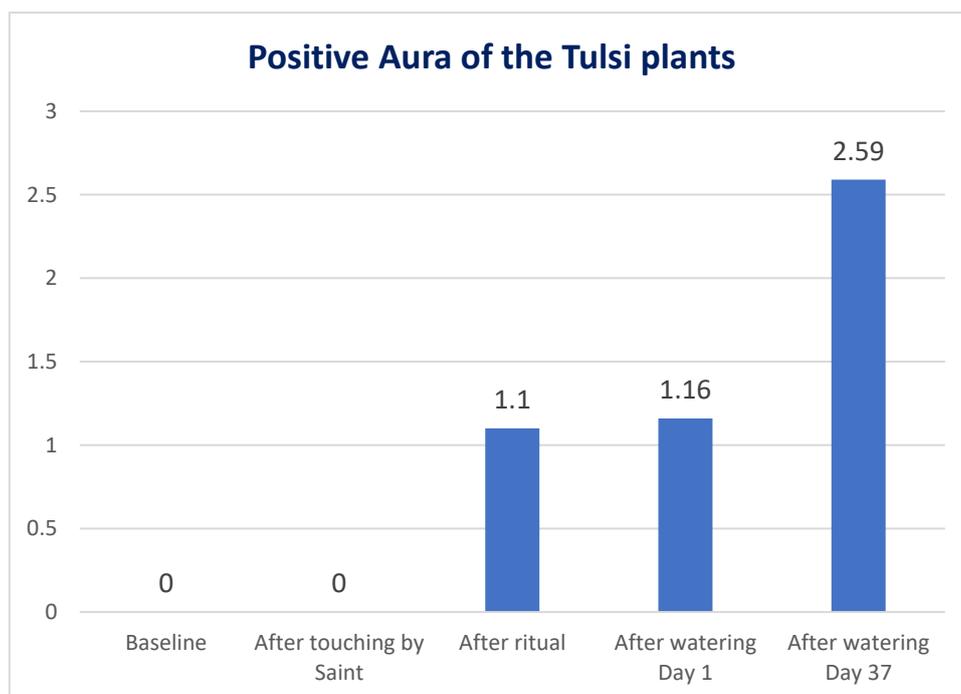
In this experiment, it was planned to study the effect of a Saint of a higher level on a Tulsi plant (Holy Basil). The Tulsi plant is considered to be a Holy plant with high levels of spiritual purity (*sāttviktā*) (Simoons, 1998). For this experiment, two Tulsi plants in a single pot were used.

Methodology :

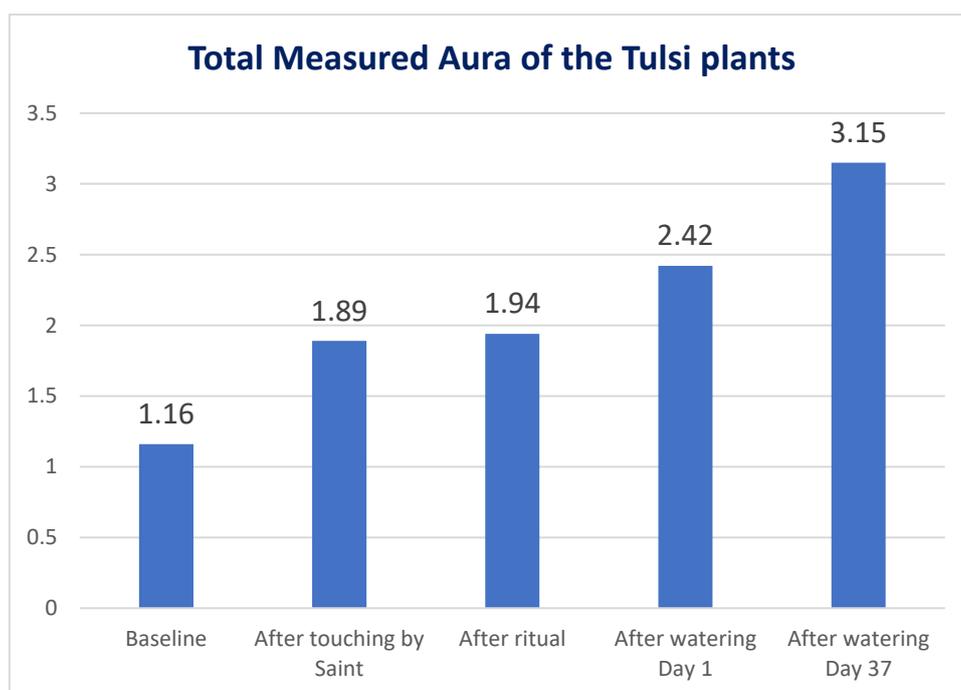
1. A baseline reading of the plants was taken using the UTS as soon as they were brought to the Spiritual Research Centre and Ashram for the ritual.
2. Thereafter, a ritual was conducted on the plants where His Holiness Dr Athavale (the Author) was required to touch the plants. A reading of the Tulsi plants was taken immediately after the plants had been touched by Him.
3. Thereafter the plants were potted (in the same pot) in a ritualistic manner, and another reading was taken at the end of this process. As per the requirement of the ritual, the plants were kept at a secure place for eight days within the Ashram premises.
4. On the 9th day, the plants were transported to the balcony of the room of His Holiness Dr Athavale. The plant was kept there for 37 days. The readings were taken on 1st day after His Holiness Dr Athavale had watered the plants. At the end of the 37th day after being watered daily by His Holiness Dr Athavale, another reading was taken to study the effect of His interaction with the Tulsi plant.

Observations :

In the two charts below the readings of each step of the experiment has been provided in relation to the 'positive aura' and 'total measured aura' as recorded by the UTS.



1. On being brought to the Ashram, the Tulsi plants recorded some positivity but it wasn't enough to measure any aura.
2. However, after the ritual, which was approximately 6 hours after the Tulsi plants had been brought to the Ashram, they registered a positive aura of 1.1 metres.
3. Thereafter, over 8 days there was not much change in the aura while the plants were kept in the Ashram premises.
4. After being taken to the balcony of His Holiness Dr Athavale's room, where the plants were watered by Him daily, the plants' positive aura more than doubled.



1. The total measured aura steadily grew with each step of the experiment.
2. After being touched by His Holiness Dr Athavale just after they were brought to the Ashram, the total measured aura mushroomed out by over 60% from 1.16 to 1.89 metres.
3. With regards to the total measured aura reading of 2.42 metres, it is unclear whether the jump from 1.94 metres was because the plants had been kept in the Ashram premises for 8 days after the ritual or because it had been watered by His Holiness Dr Athavale (just once). It is pertinent to note that the first time His Holiness Dr Athavale interacted with the plant by touching it, it responded positively with a 60% rise in total measured aura. This may indicate that just one instance of the watering of the plants by His Holiness Dr Athavale had a greater effect on the plants as opposed to just being in the Ashram environment for 8 days.
4. At the end of the experiment, over 37 days at the Ashram and having been watered by His Holiness Dr Athavale, the total measured aura of the plants increased by an extraordinary 170%.

Analysis and conclusions :

1. The Tulsi plant (like the Audumbar tree) showed a high ability to absorb positive vibrations from the environment.

2. Saints at a higher spiritual level emit high amounts of positive spiritual energy into the environment. The Tulsi plants when exposed to interactions by His Holiness Dr Athavale, showed an extraordinary ability to absorb the higher levels of positive vibrations.

4 Conclusions

The findings from various experiments elaborated in this paper showed that there is cognition and sentience in plants when exposed to a spiritually positive environment. As per Indian culture, Audumbar as well as Tulsi are considered spiritually pure plants and hence, it is likely that their propensity to absorb positive spiritual vibrations and emit them into the environment is substantially more than the other plants.

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