

# A Study on Uses and Management of Indoor Plants in Pakistan

MUHAMMAD RAMZAN, M. QASIM, A. HABIB<sup>1</sup>† AND R. MUKHTAR

*Institute of Horticultural Sciences and †Department of Plant Pathology, University of Agriculture, Faisalabad–38040, Pakistan*

<sup>1</sup>Corresponding author's e-mail: [amerhabibuaf@yahoo.com](mailto:amerhabibuaf@yahoo.com)

## ABSTRACT

Recently use of indoor plants has increased in Pakistan for improving the indoor environment of living premises. For the evaluation of indoor plants uses and problems associated with keeping and managing, majority of respondents (72.5%) ascribed that environment improvement, beautifying their houses and impressing visitors was main considerations for buying indoor plants. Some respondents had lack of guidance, high purchasing cost and location of nurseries at distant places.

**Key Words:** Indoor plants; Uses; Problems; Management

## INTRODUCTION

Indoor plant scaping is a rapidly progressing industry in Pakistan, contributing to design and installation of live interior landscape, mainly for houses, offices, lobbies and corporate spaces. Indoor plants can create aesthetically pleasing, user friendly environment for modern livings in our buildings and premises. Presence of plants reduced not only physical discomfort but also reduced dust pollution as much as 20% in addition to improving workers productivity. They also reduce concentrations of volatile organic compounds (Lohr, 1996; Lohr & Pearson-Minns, 2000). By using indoor plants we may over come fatigue, headache, sore/dry throat, coughs and dry facial skin (Ebel, 1991; NASA, 1994; Wyon, 1996).

The indoor plant business in Pakistan is in infancy and little awareness exists among common people about indoor plants. There is a desperate need to establish this business on modern lines and to create awareness about uses and benefits of indoor plants. This project will help nurserymen to evaluate their role in providing plants in cities and public opinion about using and up keeping of indoor plants.

## MATERIAL AND METHODS

**Sampling.** Research work was carried out in Faisalabad city listing a total of 36 nurseries. Out of which, 8 nurseries were selected through convenience sampling technique (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1992). From the selected nurseries through a purposive sample, 200 willing respondents were interviewed (25 from each nursery).

**Interview questionnaire.** An interview questionnaire was prepared in English and translated into Urdu for convenience in discussing research questions. On a structured formate indoor plant users were interviewed according to schedule. Information was collected through open and some closed ended questions. Questionnaire was based to collect the information on the personal information and opinion of plant users about their uses and benefits and problems regarding their management.

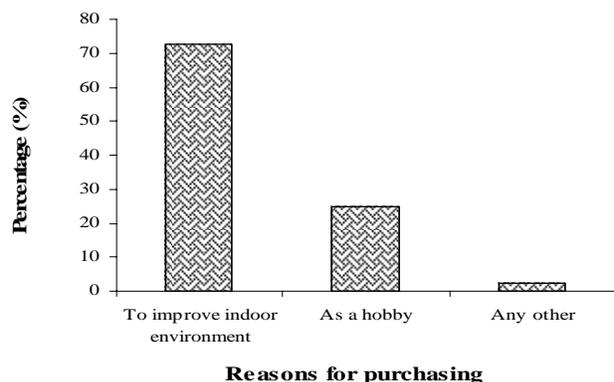
**Interview of respondents.** After testing of questionnaire a detailed survey of the nurseries was conducted, starting May 25, 2004 and ending July 5, 2004. Interviews were schedule in morning (9 - 11) and evening (4 - 6) as the most suitable time to visit nurseries. Each interview took eight to ten minutes. The data was arranged and SPSS (statistical package for social sciences) program was used for analysis. The data was stratified on the basis of gender and different income groups (lower, middle & upper class). Required cross tables were formed and Chi square test was applied to analyze the data, because there was non-parametric population and nominal variables in the data. Statistical differences of different parameters were tested at  $P < 0.05$ .

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

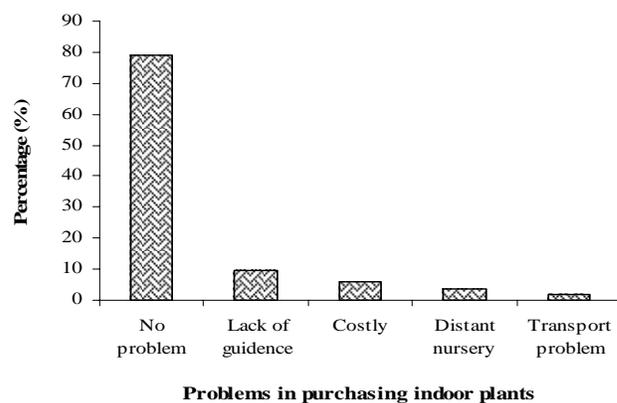
To know the extent of using indoor plants at different level of people different questions were asked, we come to know that highest percentage of respondents (72.5%) reported that they buy indoor plants for improving their indoor environment, 25% respondents adopted this as a hobby and 2.5% purchased them due to some other reasons (Fig. 1). Majority of the people used these plants for improving their indoor environment. It is well recognized that plants play a vital role for the improvement of indoor environment. They also act as art, thus offering an inexpensive decorating alternative.

In case of plant uses at different places, majority of the respondents (88.5%) ascribed that they use indoor plants in their houses, while 5.5% used in offices, 4% in shops and 2% at other places (Fig. 2). On the question of the main objective of using indoor plants, majority of the respondents (75.9%) ascribed that indoor plants impress the visitors and enhance beauty, and act as status symbol (Fig. 3). A few number of respondents mentioned that indoor plant enhance productivity, but internationally it is well recognized and accepted fact that productivity is one of the greatest benefits of interior plantings. An interior plantscape helps you to create a powerful business image (Wyon, 1996, 98).

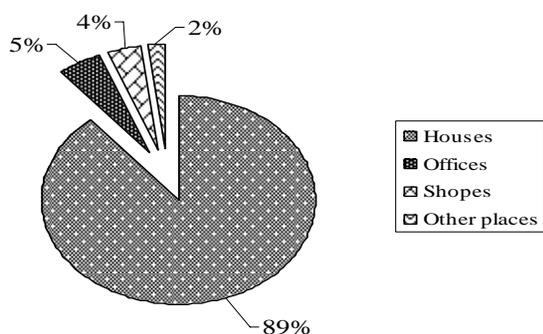
**Fig. 1. Reasons for buying indoor plants as mentioned by respondents**



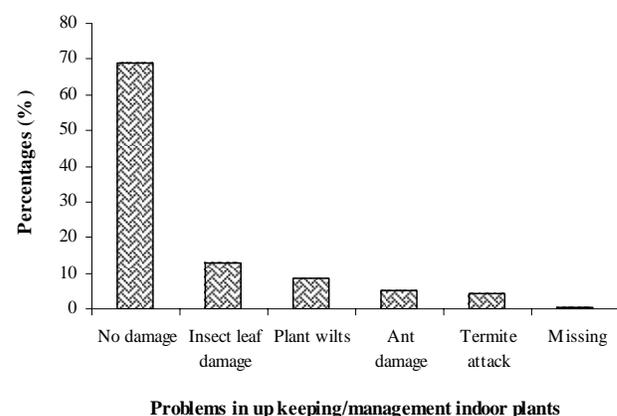
**Fig. 4. Problems in purchasing indoor plants**



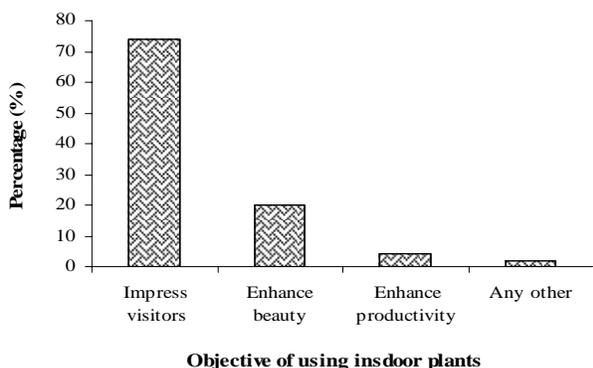
**Fig. 2. Uses of indoor plants at different places**



**Fig. 5. Problems in up keeping of indoor plants**



**Fig. 3. Main objectives of using indoor plants at different places**



In the third phase, people were asked about the problems relating to the purchase of plants. Majority of the respondents (79%) told that they have no problem in purchasing indoor plants, while 9.5% of respondents told that they face lack of guidance, 6% said that plants are very costly according to their income and 3.5% said that the nurseries are far away from their homes (Fig. 4). Though lack of guidance and high purchasing cost are the main problems, there is overall lack of information on all aspects of nursery industry. People ask nurserymen about problems, who tell them according to their experience but not scientifically. The experience of nurserymen is not always

the best solution of the particular problem.

On the question of management and up keeping problems and solutions to these problems, majority of the respondents (68.7%) said that their plants have no damage, while 8.7% opined that their plants wither soon due to wilt diseases, 13.0% told that leaves were damaged due to insect attack, 5.1% said ants damage their plants, 4.1% said that termites attack there plants (Fig. 5).

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