

Ethnomedicinal utilization of inhabitant plants by Gond tribal people of Saraipali block (C.G)

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Abstract: *From times our ancestors are practising their indigenous knowledge by using the ethno-medicinal plants available in the inhabitant area for traditional health care practices. The traditional medicine remains an integral part of the health system in Chhattisgarh state. Vernacular aboriginal knowledge was collected from the Gond tribe and Gond Baiga of Gerra, Kalidarha and Konkadi village located in Gerra panchayat whose block headquarter is Saraipali, Mahasamund district of Chhattisgarh state. Extensive indigenous knowledge of the medicinal uses of the plants is seen practised by the Gond tribe people of this area. Parochial people have remarkable knowledge of identifying the plants species which is further used in the treatment of a variety of diseases like Fever, Cold, Cough, Diabetes, Mumps, Skin diseases, Piles, Snake bite, Pox, Rashes, Fits, Mental disorders, Sorceries, Headache, Toothache, Tuberculosis, Sprain, Post-natal conditions, Chicken pox, Body-ache, Stomach-ache, Joint pain, Menstrual disorders, Impotency, Jaundice, Evil powers, dog bite, Scorpion bite, Digestion, etc. In our research paper 46 of the medicinal plants are reported which are used by the Gond tribal people and Gond Baiga each with sectorial name, botanical name usage part along with the diseases for which it is used.*

Key Words: *Diseases, Ethnomedicinal plants, Gond tribe, Indigenous knowledge.*

I. INTRODUCTION

About 80% of the world's population relies solely or largely on traditional remedies for their healthcare needs. Today, about 70,000 to 80,000 plant species are used for medicinal or aromatic purposes globally. India with its ecological, geographical and climatic diversities is perhaps the richest nation with a vast herbal medicinal wealth (About 15000-20000 plants have good medicinal value). In India the therapeutic use of herbs dates back to the vedic period.³ There are various estimates and guesstimates of the total number of plant species in medicinal use in India. These figures range from 3000 to 8000 species. The most appropriate way to resolve the issue relating to these figures is to create a "referenced" database from the "published" sources. These published sources have to include Materia Medica publications of Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, Homeopathy and Sowa-Rigpa as well as floras and published papers and books on Ethno-botany. Such an effort is essential for building an authentic database on Indian Medicinal Plants with clear linkage of each species to one or more systems of India's traditional medicine. Such a database, in electronic form, has been developed by FRLHT with financial support from NMPB and it has been hosted on NMPB's Portal for appropriate use by the practitioners of Indian Systems of Medicine, herbal industries, scholars, researchers, resource managers as well as policy makers. It incorporates 7263 botanical names of Indian medicinal plants and these botanical names have been correlated to more than 1,50,000 vernacular names in ten different languages of India. The medicinal plant species included in the database have been compiled and arranged under the six Indian Systems of Medicine namely Ayurveda, Siddha, Unani, Homeopathy, Sowa-Rigpa and Folk.⁴

The World Health Organization in 2001 estimated that eighty percent of the world population use medicinal plants in the treatment of diseases and in African countries, this rate is said to be much higher.⁸ It was also estimated that up to 90% of the population in developing countries rely on the use of medicinal plants to help meet their primary health care needs.⁹ Since 2008, UNDP in partnership with the Ministry of Environment and Forests, Government of India and the Global Environment Facility is promoting sustainable use and conservation of medicinal plants in the three ecologically-fragile states of Uttarakhand, Chhattisgarh and Arunachal Pradesh.⁶ India has a rich resource base of medicinal plants, plush with about 8,000 different species.

According to the Government of India, traditional medicines are the sole means of health care for about 65 percent of the population.⁵

Clement et. al. conducted a pilot survey to identify the top ten most common ailments where medicinal plants that were used. A total of 450 households from 50 rural communities were interviewed using the TRAMIL (Traditional Medicine in the Islands) questionnaire for data collection. Details of plants, part(s) used, and remedy formulations were elicited from informants and voucher specimens collected for identification at the National Herbarium of Trinidad and Tobago. The individual plants with relevant pharmacological evidence were linked to support their traditional use.¹

Walter and Memory had given five examples Wound healing Croton (Euphorbiaceae), Oxytocic Balansia (Clavicipitaceae) parasit-izing Cyperus (Cyperaceae), Antimalarial plants, Stimulating Ilex (Aquifoliaceae) and Intellectual property rights. In their paper they had discussed how rapidly with acculturation among the Jivaro, much of the knowledge they possess might be lost. This is important not only because such a loss would affect their long-term traditional health care, and thus make them even more dependent on Western medicine in the future, but it would also prevent the introduction of potentially valuable medicines into both Western medicine and traditional medical systems elsewhere.⁷

Erhabor et, al. carried out a survey to document medicinal plants used in the treatment of male infertility among the Ifa Nkari people of Ini Local Government Area of Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria. Ethnomedical data were collected by oral interviews using a semi-structured questionnaire. The use of plants for the treatment of male infertility has been on the increase and the current renewed interest in natural products to sustain health globally cannot be overemphasized. Therefore they recommended that the reported anti-infertility plants be investigated to ascertain their safety and efficacy in order to improve the quality of life of man as well as the well-being of married couples.²

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 2.1 To determine the most common ailments treated with ethnomedicinal plants by the Gond people and Gond Baiga in the selected research area,
- 2.2 To identify the vernacular plants used to treat these common ailments in the locality,
- 2.3 To collect the information regarding which plant part(s) is used for the treatment,
- 2.4 To preserve the indigenous knowledge of these tribal people.

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research area i.e. Saraipali block in Mahasamund district of Chhattisgarh state was purposely selected. From this block, particularly Gerra panchayat villages Gerra, Kalidarha and Konkadi were chosen as these villages are underlying on the feet of Sishupal hill which contains greater concentration of medicinal plants. An open structured interview-schedule was used to collect the data regarding medicinal plant used by people in the area. 200 respondents were randomly selected for the collection of primary data.

IV. FINDINGS

Many of the medicinal plants are used by the Gond tribals and Gond Baiga of this area. Some of these plants of medicinal importance are traditionally used by these people for the treatment of a variety of ailments Fever, Cold, Cough, Diabetes, Mumps, Skin diseases, Piles, Snake bite, Pox, Rashes, Fits, Mental disorders, Sorceries, Headache, Toothache, Tuberculosis, Sprain, Post-natal conditions, Chicken pox, Body-ache, Stomach-ache, Joint pain, Menstrual disorders, Impotency, Jaundice, Evil powers, dog bite, Scorpion bite, Digestion, etc.

Among the Gonds, the health and diseases are concerned with the proper functioning of the body. A healthy person seems to do their routine work without exhaust. He/she take proper diet, perform their work with maximum efficiency are considered as healthy person. Any person with physical abnormality like paralysis, polio etc is considered to be ill. If a person is unable to do routine work with maximum efficiency, has lack of concentration, loss of appetite and laziness are considered ill.

Health and illness are related to many facts like climatic change, improper food intake, unhygienic conditions, intake of stale food, animal bites, cold etc. Unsatisfied soul of dead ancestors, clan deities, evil intrusions, and sorcerer's witchcraft are also believed to be the cause of illness.

Diagnosis of disease among the Gonds is based on both traditional and modern method of diagnosis of the health problems. If a person falls ill they first approach either to a traditional healer, faith healer or modern medical practitioner. Every system has its own method of diagnosing the disease and that should be done very

systematically. The local traditional healers are expertise in diagnosing the disease by calculating the pulse, by observing eye colour, tongue, neck etc.

Although traditional medicine flourished in India for quite a long time yet for a while it was subdued under the impact of modern medicine. With the coming of chemical revolution in world & boon of synthetic products including synthetic medicines, the faith in and the popularity of traditional herbal medicine gradually declined. But as science revealed the great hazards of synthetic medicines on human health, with their high costs which is beyond the reach of common people, the traditional herbal medicine has once again started gaining importance all over the world but especially in developing countries. In India, larger parts of rural and backward population still depend on indigenous folk practitioners. Also in our research area the traditional practice of medicinal plants by the tribal people can be best seen following their ethnic practices. In a total of 46 medicinal plants are found to be used for the treatment of a variety of diseases as already mentioned above of which some are locally available in their area whereas some are found in nearby area or purchased for the shops. Also by doing this research a proper documentation is recorded of the ethnomedicinal plants used by these Gond tribe people who are residing in Gerra panchayat in Saraipali block of Mahasamund district, Chhattisgarh state.

Table No. 1: Distribution of villagers according to category in Gerra panchayat of Saraipali block

| S.N | Village Name | Category | Male | Female | Total |
|--------------------|--------------|----------|------------|------------|-------------|
| 1. | Gerra | ST | 55 | 62 | 117 |
| | | SC | 13 | 14 | 27 |
| | | OBC | 196 | 182 | 378 |
| 2. | Kalidarha | ST | 101 | 100 | 201 |
| | | SC | 49 | 43 | 92 |
| | | OBC | 87 | 90 | 177 |
| 3. | Konkadi | ST | 129 | 120 | 249 |
| | | SC | 56 | 68 | 124 |
| | | OBC | 27 | 31 | 58 |
| 4. | Total | ST | 285 | 282 | 567 |
| | | SC | 118 | 125 | 243 |
| | | OBC | 310 | 303 | 613 |
| Grand Total | | | 713 | 710 | 1423 |

Table No. 2: Showing the medicinal plants used by the Gond people of Saraipali block of Chhattisgarh state

| S.N | Name of the herb | Botanical name | Part used | Disease |
|-----|-----------------------|---|----------------------|--------------------------------------|
| 1 | Marich | Piper longum L. | Fruit | Cough, Tuberculosis, Impotency. |
| 2 | Golmirchi | Piper nigrum L. | Fruit | Cough, Tuberculosis, |
| 3 | Adarak (Ginger) | Zingiber officinalis Rose | stem | Cough, Tuberculosis, |
| 4 | Laung (Clove) | Syzygium aromaticum (Linn.) Merr & Perry | Fruit | Cough, Tuberculosis, |
| 5 | Elaichi (Cardamom) | Elettaria cardamomum | Fruit | Cough, Tuberculosis, |
| 6 | Gudmaari | Gymnema sylvestre | Leaf | Diabetes |
| 7 | Koria | Holarrhena antidyenterica Wall | Root | Piles |
| 8 | Beerha | Terminalia bellirica (Gaertner) Roxb | Dried-resin (gum) | Fits, Snake-bite |
| 9 | Kumbhimadaan | Careya arborea Roxb | Stem | Mumps, Skin diseases, Tooth-ache. |
| 10 | Semhermadaan | Bombox ceiba L. | Stem | Skin-diseases, Pox, Rashes. |
| 11 | Hirankhuri | Elephantopus scaber L. | Tuber | Skin-diseases |
| 12 | Bel | Aeglemarmelos(L-) Correa | Bark | Mental disorders |

| | | | | |
|-----|--------------------|---|--------------|--|
| 13 | Kapsamadaan | Gossypium hirsutum L. | Stem | Magic, Sorceries. |
| 14 | Beehimadaan | Psidium guafava L. | Stem | Magic, Sorceries. |
| 15 | Ashhwagandha | Withamin somnifera (L.) Dunal | Leaf | Head- ache |
| 16 | Garud | Radermachera xylocarpa (Roxb.) K. Schum | Fruit, Root | Head- ache, Post-natal, Snake-bite. |
| 17 | Nilgiri | Eucalyptus sp. | Bark | Stomach-ache, impotency. |
| 18 | Mehendi (Henna) | Lawsonia inermis L. | Leaf | Jaundice |
| 19 | Chitaar | Sudenum nagpurens L. | Leaf | Body-ache |
| 20 | Hirwa | Lensesculenta Moench | Leaf, Fruit | Body-ache, for post-natal conditions |
| 21 | Pataali | Solanum lycopersicum L. | Root | Sprain, Snake-bite |
| 22 | Jhagrin | Gloriosa superb L. | Root | Sprain |
| 23 | Saliyamadaan | Boswellia Serrata Roxb.ex Colebr | Stem | Fever |
| 24 | Raktmahajaal | Cloumbia laevia | Stem | Overheating, Fever, For stamina & Menstrual disorders, Impotency |
| 25 | Dubilota | Cynodon dactylon | Leaf | Scorpion-bite |
| 26 | Arak | Calotropis gigantean/ procera | Flower | Dog-bite, Snake-bite |
| 27 | Tulsi | Ocimum sanctum | Leaves | Dog-bite, Snake-bite |
| 28 | Nageshwar | Mesua ferrea L. | Flower | Impotency |
| 29 | Kaju (Cashewnut) | Anacardium occidentale | Fruit | Impotency |
| 30 | Kismis(Raisin) | Vitis vinifera | Fruit | Impotency |
| 31. | Ashok | Saraca indica | Bark | Menstrual disorders |
| 32 | Kharhar | Garddenia turgida | Root | For postnatal conditions |
| 33 | Girhul | Indigofera pulchella Roxb. | Root | For postnatal conditions |
| 34 | Ajwain | Carcum copticum Benth | Fruit | For postnatal conditions |
| 35 | Peepli | Piper Longum | Fruit | For postnatal conditions, Digestion |
| 36 | Sonth (dry ginger) | Zingiber officinale | Stem | For postnatal conditions, Digestion |
| 37 | Amla | Emblica officinalis | Fruit | Digestion |
| 38 | Harra | Terminalia chebula | Seedcoat | Digestion |
| 39 | Behra | Terminalia bellerica | Fruit | Digestion |
| 40 | Gurbheli | Vangueria pubescens Kurz | Root | Snake-bite |
| 41 | Neem | Azadirachta indica | Leaf, Root | Snake-bite |
| 42 | Baadichang | Symphorema polyandrum Wight | Flower, Seed | Snake-bite |
| 43 | Hasiyadaabar | Leea macrophylla | Tuber | Chest-pain |
| 44 | Van haldi | Curcuma longa | Root | Jaundice, Joint-pains |
| 45 | Pudina(mint) | Mentha arevensis | Leaf | Head-ache |
| 46 | Tilli/Til(Sesame) | Sesamum indicum | Fruit | Postnatal stage |

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