TRADITIONAL ETHNOMEDICINAL INVESTIGATION FROM POHRADEVI FOREST OF WASHIM DISTRICT

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Abstract

Ethnomedicine is a study or comparison of the traditional medicine practiced by various ethnic groups, and especially by indigenous peoples. Research interest and activities in the area of ethnomedicine have increased tremendously in the last decade. The components of ethnomedicine have long been ignored by many biomedical practitioners for various reasons. Present investigation based on herbal folk remedy used by the tribal of Pohradevi Forest in Pohradevi village of Washim District. In this area tribes like Banjara and Gawali are dominant in such remote areas very few persons are so called vaidoos and taboos, a well informant of medicinal plants. In the present work 25 plant species are identified, which are regularly used by them and other locality.

Keywords: *Ethnomedicine, ethnic groups, indigenous peoples, biomedical practitioners, Pohradevi Forest, herbal folk remedy.*

INTRODUCTION

Ethnomedicine is a study or comparison of the traditional medicine practiced by various ethnic groups, and especially by indigenous peoples. The word *ethnomedicine* is sometimes used as a synonym for *traditional medicine*. Ethnomedical research is interdisciplinary; in its study of traditional medicines, it applies the methods of ethnobotany and medical anthropology. Often, the medicine traditions it studies are preserved only by oral tradition. (Acharya and Shrivastava, 2008).Ethnomedicine refers to the study of traditional medical practice which is concerned with the cultural interpretation of health, diseases and illness and also addresses the healthcare seeking process and healing practices. The practice of ethnomedicine is a complex multi-disciplinary system constituting the use of plants, spirituality and the natural environment and has been the source of healing for people for millennia ((Lowe *et al*, 2000)).

Research interest and activities in the area of ethnomedicine have increased tremendously in the last decade. Since the inception of the discipline, scientific research in ethnomedicine has made important contribution to the understanding of traditional subsistence, medical knowledge and practice. The explosion of the ethnomedicine literature has been stimulated by an increased awareness of the consequences of the forced displacement and/or acculturation of indigenous people, the recognition of indigenous health concepts as a means of maintaining ethnic identities, the search for new medical treatments and technologies (Krippner, 2003). The components of ethnomedicine have long been ignored by many biomedical practitioners for various reasons. For example, the chemical composition, dosages and toxicity of the plants used in ethnomedicine are not clearly defined (Lowe *et al*, 2000). However, it is interesting to note that the ethnomedicinal uses of plants is one of the most successful criteria used by the pharmaceutical industry in finding new therapeutic agents for the various fields of biomedicine (Cox and Balick, 1994).

Pohradevi Forest area is situated in Manorataluka of Washim district in Maharashtra. Poharadevi is one of the important and well known pilgrimage of Maharashtra particularly workshiped and devoted by BanjaraSamaj. It is a wholly and pious place for Banjara community. The people belonging to Banjara tribe come in crowed of thousands and lakes all places of India to workship deity of Poharadevi. Poharadevi, is situated in Maharashtra state at East region.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

In order to find out traditional herbal folk remedies used by remote villages in a tribal population of Pohradevi forest, Authors made frequent visits at different place with local medicine men, vaidoos, taboos, also forest guards and foresters in that area. During survey every care was taken to collect data on detailed information based on oral interview and discussion with them. The specimens of plants were noted and voucher number was given in the fields. The collected specimens are derived and processed then herbarium sheets are prepared. The dried specimen were critically studied and their identification confirmed by reference to Flora of British India, J. D. Hooker (1872-1897), Flora of Presidency of Bombay, T. Cooke (1956), Flora of Marathwada, V.N. Naik (1998), Flora of Akola District, Kamble and Pradhan (1988).

OBSERVATION AND RESULT:

Enumeration of medicinal plants:

1. *Dendrophthoe falcata* (L.f.) Ettingsh Family: Loranthaceae

Uses: A decoction prepared by using stem bark with county liquors by the tribals, is given against menstrual problem. Stem bark is astringent. A single dose of the plant serves the purpose of anti-fertility; however, trials are required to reach any valid conclusion.

2. *Ficus racemosa* L. Family: Moraceae

Uses: Root latex of *Ficus* of about 10 ml thrice in a day for 3 days, used against urinestone.

3. *Amaranthus spinosus* L. Family: Amaranthaceae

Uses: Whole plant is dried in shade, then burn to prepare ash. Dissolved ash in water, kept it overnight, and then early in the morning filter it. At the bottom of pot salt is remaining. Take the salt and apply externally to the stomach against urine stone.

4. *Sphaeranthus indicus* L. Family: Asteraceae
***Adhatoda zeylanica* Medic**. Family: Acanthaceae
***Zingiber officinale* Rosc.** Family: Zingiberaceae
***Cassia angustifolia* Vahl.** Family: Caesalpiniaceae
***Solanum surattense* Burm.f.** Family: Solanaceae
***Raphanus sativus* L.** Family: Brassicaceae

Uses: Taking equal quantity powder of *Sphaeranthus* flowers + leaf of *Adhathoda* + Sunth powder + *Cassia* powder + Roots of *Solanum*, then mixed with juice of leaf and roots of *Raphanus* + honey; prepare a solid paste, then from this paste tablets of about 2gm are prepared. Take 2 tablets per day with lukewarm water for a month against heart problem and blood pressure.

5. *Adhatoda zeylanica* Medic. Family: Acanthaceae

Uses: Leaf juice of *Adhatoda*, one tea spoon mixed with 1 spoon honey, take once in a dayfor one month against heart problem and blood pressure.

6. *Terminalia arjuna* (Roxb.) Wt. & Arn. Family: Combretaceae

Uses: About 10 gm bark of *T. arjuna* boiled with ½ liter water, prepared a decoction of about ¼ litre; filter it. Take 4 table spoon decoction + 1 tea spoon honey once in a day for 1 month. 10 gm bark of *T. arjuna* keep it in a cup of water for ½ hrs. then filter it. Filtrate is orally given for days against excessive bleeding during menstrual cycle.

A 5 gm powder of *Glycyrrhiza glabra* L. mixed with 5gm powder of *T. arjuna* bark. Take it orally with water for a month against heart problem.

7. *Cassia fistula* L. Family: Caesalpiniaceae

A 50 gm roots of Cassia mixed with 1/4thlitre water and a decoction is prepared, filter it, divide it in two parts. Take orally in morning and evening for seven days.

8. ***Centella asiatica* (L.) Urb.** Family: Apiaceae
***Rauwolfia serpentina* (L.) Benth. ex. Kurz** Family: Apocynaceae

***Terminalia arjuna* (Roxb.) Wt. & Arn.** Family: Combretaceae
***Terminalia chebula* Retz.** Family: Combretaceae
***Eclipta alba* (L.) Hassk.** Family: Asteraceae
Uses: Take all above contents in equal quantity and make a fine powder, then mixed with Manuka in mixer grinder of about 5 gm weighed tablets are prepared from above contents. Take 2 tablets with luke warm water once in a day for one month.

9. *Apluda mutica* L. Family: Poaceae
Uses: A powder/ paste is prepared by crushing the leaves in a grinder, applied externally to the injury to stop bleeding after injury.

10. *Panicum paludosum* Roxb. Family: Poaceae
Uses: Prepare a fine powder of seed with the help of mixer grinder. About 1 teaspoon powder mixed with a glass of water. Take it orally twice in a day to remove weakness after delivery. Also cooked seeds used twice in a day for 8 days to remove physical weakness.

11. *Cymbopogon citratus* (DC.) Stapf. Family: Poaceae
Uses: A decoction of leaves with sugar used against cough and cold, stomach ache and fever.

12. *Ischaemum pilosum* (Klein ex. Willd.) Wt. Family: Poaceae
Uses: Take one teaspoon fine root powder, mixed with a glass of water and keep it for about ½ hours; then filter it by using muslin cloth, take it orally twice in a day against fever, urine disorder. A decoction of root powder is given against urine stone twice in a day for seven days. A teaspoon of root powder is given to cow, twice in a day for 5 days to flow milk.

13. *Amaranthus spinosus* L. Family: Amaranthaceae
Uses: Ash is prepared by burning a whole plant. Take 30 gm ash, mixed with 60 ml of water, leave it for overnight, then on next day morning pour this water in another pot and boil it till the salt formation. Then apply externally to stomach for removal of urine stone.

14. *Moringa oleifera* Lamk. Family: Moringaceae
Uses: A juice obtained by crushing the leaves in a grinding machine mixed with 1 teaspoon powder of *Zingiber officinale* + half teaspoon salt, $1/4^{th}$ spoon powder of *Asafoetida northax*. Then tablets of about 5 gm weight are prepared from this mixture. Take 2 tablets twice in a day for 21 days against joint pain.

15. *Terminalia bellerica* (Gaertn.) Roxb. Family: Combretaceae
Uses: An inner part of seeds of about 10 gm is obtained by breaking the seeds. Then prepare the fine powder mixed with 100 ml of coconut oil, boiled it carefully after cooling filter it by using muslin cloth; applied externally to hairs for blackening for about 2 months.

16. *Cyperus rotundus* L. Family: Cyperaceae
Uses: About 125 gm roots boiled with a liter of water $1/4^{th}$ decoction is remaining. Add 50ml sesamum oil, again boil it for purification. After this filter it, applied externally for 2 months for blackening of hairs.

17. *Aloe vera* (L.) Burm. f. Family: Liliaceae
***Adhatoda zeylanica* Medic.** Family: Acanthaceae
Uses: Take half teaspoon juice of *Aloe* and *Adhathoda*leaves mixed with 1 teaspoon sugar, take it twice in a day for 21 days.

18. *Cassia auriculata* L. Family: Caesalpiniaceae
Uses: A piece of young stem used against tooth ache. Brush is prepared for teeth cleaning.

19. *Cassia fistula* L. Family: Caesalpiniaceae
Uses: Young fleshy pods after crushing mixed with water and boiled; used as an insecticide against bed bug.

20. *Tephrosia villosa* (L.) Pers. Family: Fabaceae
Uses: A decoction is prepared by using a whole plant. It is filtered by using muslin cloth then solidify and prepare a paste, which is used for making tablets of about 5 gm. Take tablets twice in a day against mole formation for about 6 months.

21. *Blumea belangeriana* DC. Family: Asteraceae
Uses: A juice obtained from leaves mixed with one teaspoon cow ghee used against piles for 4 days to stop bleeding.

22. *Vicoa indica* (L.) DC. Family:Asteraceae
Uses: Take paste prepared from whole plant of *Vicoa* mixed with a cup of water, filter it. Orally give to woman during menstrual cycle for 4 days. It stops pregnancy.

23. *Rungia repens*(L.) Nees. Family: Acanthaceae
Uses: A complete plant used against snake bite, cough, cold. Roots used against muscular pain.

24. *Alangium lamarckii* Thw. Family: Alangiaceae
Uses: An oil obtained from fruits used against injury and also for the alopecia.

25. *Mangifera indica* L. Family: Anacardiaceae

Uses: A gum or latex of leaves used against ophthalmic problem.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION:

Present work is the first ethnomedicinal work on Pohradevi forest area of Washim district. Most of the plants are used combined and in combination they give better results than used individually. These plants are used from generation to generation and are fully dependent on the expert medicine men, that's why these plants are having importance in this area. Few plants are used by the Banjara tribes are reported for the first time in this region, namely *Alangium lamarckii* against Alopecia; use of *Panicum* against weakness and *Ischaemum* against urine stone, also, use of *A. spinosus* in curing urine stone. Such type of study needs documentation and also investigation for further chemical analysis.

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