

GOLDEN RESEARCH THOUGHTS

INFANT HEALTHCARE BY TRIBALS FROM SHIRPUR TAHSIL, OF DHULE DISTRICT OF MAHARASHTRA



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Abstract :

Dhule district is a tribal district of Maharashtra state. The district is inhabited by 40% of tribal population, habitually with their discrete way of life, customs, dialects and cultural tradition. These tribal exploit local food and vegetable plants for various diseases among themselves through the experiences. Women's specifically know the ethnomedicinal values in traditionally used plants. Much of this wealth is preserved as an unwritten material medico of the tribal folk. Many tribal beliefs prevent them to unknot the intrinsic worth of the plants to outside world. But, it is observed that very less concrete work had been done to document this knowledge by various means. So the purpose of this study is to document the unwritten knowledge related to traditional uses of medicinal plants for curing infant diseases. The uses of 32 plants employed for curing infant diseases among the tribes of Shirpur Tahsil of Dhule district is reported.

Keywords: Tribal folk medicines; Infant; Traditional Plants; Shirpur.

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INTRODUCTION

Plants have been used since prehistoric times for treatment of various ailments. India has second largest tribal population was 8.2% of country's population (Census 2001). Tribal people mostly depend on forest for their livelihood. Tribal communities residing in the hilly areas are solely dependent on this readily available resource. A traditional medical practice is an important part of the primary healthcare system in the developing world. They have preserved the wealth of traditional knowledge as a part of their belief and customs. Maharashtra state has 47 scheduled tribal communities with 9.27% of total population of the state¹. Shirpur is the tribal dominated tahsil in Dhule district of Maharashtra state on the border of Madhya Pradesh. It is situated in 21°, 19', 17" to North latitude and 74°, 19', 49" East longitude(Fig.1). Pawara, Barela, Tadvi, Bhil etc are among the prominent tribal communities residing in the Satpura ranges of Shirpur tahsil. This population is inhabitant of the Satpuda area which is very poor and can't afford expensive medicine from the local markets. Instead of that they use some wild plants as a medicine to cure various infant diseases. So in spite of advancement in the modern medicine, the traditional systems of medicine along with folklore knowledge gained by the tribals remain as first option to treat different health problems in this population. Though the region is rich in vegetation composed of dry deciduous, semi evergreen species and diversified plant wealth, there are very few reports of ethnomedicine from this Satpura Forest. However, studies on medicinal plants of Shirpur area are lacking except few sporadic references. Flora of Dhule and Nandurbar districts of Maharashtra is investigated floristically by Dr. D. A. Patil⁽²⁾. There are few publications and record from ethnobotanical point of view⁽³⁻¹¹⁾. The purpose of present study is to document the unwritten knowledge related to traditional uses of medicinal plants for curing infant diseases. The uses of 32 plants employed for curing infant diseases among the tribes of Shirpur tahsil of Dhule district is reported.

METHODOLOGY

The present authors visited in Satpura zone in Shirpur Tahsil of Dhule District mainly comprises Vakvad, Zende Anjan, Amba, Khambala, Rohini, Bhoity, Sangvi, Palasner, Sule, Khairkhuti. Initial visits were planned only for establishing good acquaintance with tribal people and collection of plants. In the later visits ethnomedicinal data was collected from the tribal community. For the same, traditional healers, tribal priests, women, heads of tribals and other rural informants of various fields like farmers were interviewed. Local plant names, medicinal recipes, doses and mode of application plant part used beside infant diseases treated, were noted during different visits. Proof data was made by group discussions among the tribal peoples including both the genders consisting of different age classes. These plants were listed with plant families, vernacular name, tribal name, ailment/diseases, plant part used and mode of preparation with dose. Identification and authentication of collected plants were confirmed by using flora of Dhule and Nandurbar District ⁽²⁾, Flora of presidency of Bombay ⁽¹²⁾, BSI Flora of Maharashtra state⁽¹³⁾. Identification was confirmed by matching the plant specimens at BSI Pune. Plant specimens have been processed for herbarium according to the standard methods⁽¹⁴⁾. Specimens were deposited in herbarium of Department of Botany, R. C. Patel Science College, Shirpur, Maharashtra, India. The record includes botanical name, family, local name, plant part used, method of preparation, mode of administration, use of plant.

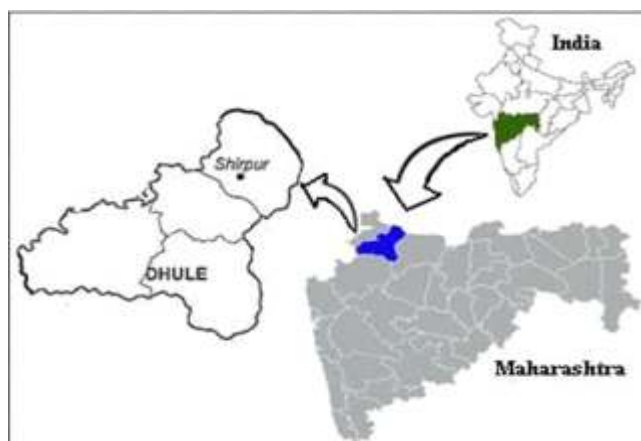


Fig. 1-Location map of study area

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The present study among the different tribes, with respect to traditional healers, tribal priests and women recorded medicinal uses of 32 plant species in the treatment of infant diseases. Based on the interviews conducted, it is

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evident that the knowledge is limited to adult population living in this region. In table 1 most prominent and common wild plants used in infant diseases are arranged along with their family, vernacular name, tribal name, ailment/diseases, plant part used and mode of preparation.

In the present field survey, we have identified 32 different medicinal plants belonging to 19 families using 32 different formulations for the treatment of infant diseases. Out of these formulations 57% were orally administered, while rest were for external use only. Thirty two medicinal plants used for various infant diseases were documented during this field survey. Among these medicinal plants the most important plant family is Apiaceae. Skin problem is the one against which 4 different preparations were used, followed by cough and fever. Different plant parts were used for treatment by the tribal people. Among the different plant parts, leaves were used in 17 preparations whereas in 6 cases seeds were found to be used; fruit, stem and rhizomes were used in three, two and two cases respectively.

Present investigation reveals that the tribal peoples are aware of the traditional knowledge of using *Cynodon dactylon*, *Curcuma longa*, *Momordica indica* and *Cicer arietinum* for the treatment of skin diseases in infants. However the use of stems of *Euphorbia antiquarum*, fruits of *Ficus racemosa*, fruits of *Tamarindus indica* and leaf ash of *Mangifera indica* is new information for the traditional system of medicine. The information collected during this study with respect to medicinal plants and their formulation to treat various infant diseases need a thorough phytochemical and pharmacological screening to isolate the active constituents and to find out the mechanism of action of the same. Scientific analysis of these plants and their folk remedies will definitely be useful for the prosperity of mankind.

Table 1-Folk remedies of tribal of Shirpur Tahsil

Botanical Name and Voucher Number	Family	Vernacular Name (Pawara name)	Ailment/ Diseases	Part used and mode of preparation with dose
<i>Allium cepa</i> L. (THRDRC-0619)	Liliaceae	Kanda (Dunglyu)	Cough	One teaspoon of Bulb decoction for twice a day
<i>Aloe vera</i> (L.) Burm F (THRDRC-0375)	Liliaceae	Korphad (Kuwarphati)	Worms	One teaspoon of Leaf pulp decoction for 3 days
<i>Apium graveolens</i> L. (THRDRC-0128)	Apiaceae	Owa (Ajam)	Gas troubles	One teaspoon of fruit decoction for twice a day
<i>Basella alba</i> L. (THRDRC-0089)	Basellaceae	Mayalu (Pansha)	Biliousness	Two teaspoon of leaf decoction per day for 7 Days
<i>Cassia tora</i> L. (THRDRC-0043)	Caesalpiniaceae	Tarota (Puvadhya)	Teeth fever	Half teaspoon of leaf decoction twice a day for 14 days
<i>Cardiospermum helicacabum</i> L. (THRDRC-0669)	Sapindaceae	Kanputi (Akaryaphu)	Ear pus	One drop of leaf juice per day for 4 days
<i>Coriandrum sativum</i> L. (THRDRC-0591)	Apiaceae	Kothmir (Kuthmir)	Remove intestinal worm	One teaspoon juice of leaf twice a day for 7 Days
<i>Curcuma longa</i> L. (THRDRC-0334)	Zingiberaceae	Halad (Ovit)	Skin disease	Dry powder of rhizome applied externally to affected area
<i>Cynodon dactylon</i> (L.) Pers. (THRDRC-0495)	Graminae	Harli (Donkto)	Skin disease	Paste of whole plant applied externally to affected area
<i>Cyperus scariosus</i> R. Br. (THRDRC-0279)	Cyperaceae	Nagar motha (Levalya)	Diarrhoea, Teething troubles	Half teaspoon of rhizome decoction twice a day for 7 days
<i>Daucus carota</i> L. (THRDRC-0335)	Apiaceae	Gajar (Gajarya)	Jaundice	10 ml of Root juice twice a day for 14 days
<i>Euphorbia antiquarum</i> L. (THRDRC-0567)	Euphorbiaceae	Nivdung (Thodhu)	Cough	Half teaspoon of stem juice twice a day for 3 days
<i>Ficus racemosa</i> L. (THRDRC-0010)	Moraceae	Umber (Umbrya)	Dyspepsia, Dysentery	One teaspoon of ripe fruit juice twice a

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<i>Oxalis corniculata</i> L. (THRDR-0105)	Oxalidaceae	Ambuti (Penoi)	Headache	Leaf pulp applied on forehead
<i>Portulaca oleracea</i> L. (THRDR-0223)	Portulacaceae	Ghol (PanBhagi)	Inflammation and heat	Leaf pulp applied on inflammation and heat
<i>Solanum nigrum</i> L. (THRDR-0392)	Solanaceae	Komoni (Lalpri)	Rickets	Half teaspoon of leaf juice taken twice a day for 7 days
<i>Tamarindus indica</i> L. (THRDR-0467)	Caesalpinaceae	Chinch (Aamali)	Whooping cough	Half teaspoon of seed paste taken twice a day for 3 days
<i>Tridax procumbens</i> L. (THRDR-0531)	Compositae	Dagadi Pala (Bagadkod)	Wound	Leaf juice applied externally on wounds
<i>Calotropis procera</i> L. (THRDR-0400)	Asclepidaceae	Rui (Rachakin)	Deafness	Toasted ripe leaf juice 1-2 drops twice a day for 14 days
<i>Mangifera indica</i> L. (THRDR-0115)	Anacardiaceae	Aam (Aamragutuva)	Diarrhoea, Vermicide	One teaspoon Gyrated Seed cotyledon in buttermilk taken twice a day for 7 days
<i>Butea monosperma</i> L. (THRDR-0096)	Papilionaceae	Palas (Pohavi)	Fever	¼ th teaspoon dried flower powder taken in mother milk and sugar
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> Mill. (THRDR-0053)	Apiaceae	Badishop (Badishep)	Prickly heat	Paste of seeds applied externally on body
<i>Solanum tuberosum</i> L. (THRDR-0355)	Solaneceae	Batata (Botatu)	Boil	Paste of potato applied externally on body
<i>Momordica indica</i> L. (THRDR-0167)	Cucurbitaceae	Kaarale (Kerala)	Skin diseases	Massage Paste of leaves externally on body
<i>Azadirachta indica</i> L. (THRDR-0037)	Meliaceae	Limb (Nimadobee)	Chicken pox	Half teaspoon of seed juice taken thrice a day for 2 days
<i>Gingiber officinalis</i> L. (THRDR-0085)	Gingiberaceae	Adrak (Adaa)	Saliva to dribble	3-4 drops of ginger + Ocimum leaf extract taken twice a day for 14 days
<i>Punica granatum</i> L. (THRDR-0082)	Lythraceae	Dalim (Dalim)	Sore	Paste of pomegranate leaf applied externally on body
<i>Ocimum santum</i> L. (THRDR-0063)	Labiataeae	Tulas (Tulasi)	Insect bite	Leaf pulp applied on Insect bite
<i>Cuminum cyminum</i> L. (THRDR-0066)	Apiaceae	Jira (Jeero)	Spider bite	Seed paste applied on spider bite
<i>Cicer arietinum</i> L. (THRDR-0019)	Papilionaceae	Harbhara pith (Chhana-lut)	Skin shining	Seed flour and milk applied externally on body
<i>Mangifera indica</i> L. (THRDR-0115)	Anacardiaceae	Aamba pan (Aamra pane)	Pustule	Leaf ash mixed in castor oil and
<i>Myristica fragrans</i> L. (THRDR-0045)	Myristicaceae	Jaiphah (Jayphala)	Deep sleep	Seed paste applied on forehead for deep sleep

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Authors are grateful to Dr. D. R. Patil, Principal, R. C. Patel Arts, Commerce and Science College, Shirpur. Authors are also thankful to all tribals and forest officers working in the region for their help and co-operation, during entire study and field work.

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