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Ethnobotany of Medicinal Plants of Bastar, Chhattishgarh

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ABSTRACT

Forest of Bastar region is endowed with a variety of medicinal flora, the tribal population dwell inside the forest and collect variety of medicinal and drug yielding plants. Over exploitation in unscientific manner has resulted in extinction of many important medicinal plants and some are in the verge of extinction. In this context, there is an urgent need for conducting ethno medicinal forest surveys and to document the important drug yielding plants along with their therapeutic uses. The indigenous technical knowledge of tribal population regarding the utilization of different plant products for curing various diseases needs to be documented since the valuable information is gradually lost in successive generation. The Present paper attempts to develop participatory approaches among the tribes of Darbah block of Bastar for scientific utilization and conservation of Ethno medicinal flora of the region in a sustainable manner.

Keywords; *Ethnobotany, Tribal Development*

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1. Introduction

The word ethno botany literally means the study of botany of the primitive human race. This term was first applied by Harshberger in 1895 to the study of plants used by primitive and aboriginal people. The term Ethno botany has been variously defined and interpreted by subsequent writers. While Jones (1941) defined it as ‘the study of the interrelation of primitive man and plants. Faulks (1958) considered the subject of Ethno botany as the total relationship between man and vegetation. Vartak and Gadgil (1980) defined “Ethno botany is a branch of

economic botany, a section of which deals with the role of plants in the life and culture of aborigines and tribal people.

Ethno medicine is an important aspect of Ethno botany. Ethno botany commonly refers to the interrelationships between tribes , primitive people and the relationship is being extended to the entire range of influence of each other and not merely confined to the use. The study about the traditional medicinal of the aboriginal is Ethno medicine.



The indigenous people are dependent on forest products for their survival. They utilize their traditional knowledge and indigenous systems of medicine for the treatment of various diseases and ailments. Plants used for traditional medicine contain a wide range of substances that can be used to treat chronic as well as infectious diseases. The traditional tribal healers are dwindling in number and this vast knowledge resource is being diminished although the medicinal use of plants is still of great importance.

Ethno medicinal approach involves actual field work in terms of personal observation of the Primitive indigenous and tribal people. Apart from collection of plant and recording of data it would be desirable to have careful observation on the methods of use of plants of tribes in their day to day ailments for the sake of cure and better health. The use of plants and the mode of administration of the drugs extract from the plants lead one to conclude about the interrelationship between tribes and the medicinal plants. For documentation purpose we may mention this relationship systematically under some headings.

First of November 2000 the known Heart of India "Madhya Pradesh" has been divided in two parts. One of which was made Chhattisgarh. The Bastar range lies the most south-west part of Chhattisgarh. Bastar lies between 17°04'N-20°34'N and 81°15'E-82°15'E. The area of this new district is 17016.04 sqkm. Bastar is bounded by 4 states Odisha in East, Maharashtra in west, Andhra Pradesh in south and Madhya Pradesh in north.

In Bastar District is divided into four Tehsils namely Jagdalpur, Kondagaon, Narayanpur and Keshkal. According to 2001 census population of Bastar is 13,20,253 total SC. Population is 38679 (2.96%) and Scheduled tribes Population is 866488 (66.31).

The principal tribes of the Bastar are Abujh Maria, Bison Horn Maria, Muria, Halba, Bhatra, Gond, Dhuruwa, Godaba, and Dorla among whom Abujh Maria, Bison Horn Maria, Muria and Dorla speak Dravidian Language. The Dhuruwa tribes speak Parji Language. Halba is the lingua franca of Bastar.

Review of Literature :For the purpose of the present study we have gone through the following scientific journal and literature. The review of literature consists of both Biological Science and Social Science. Hence, we reviewed the researches of Ambastu (1986) Ambuwatia et al 13 (2001), Bhalla et al (1982) De(1968) Faulk (1958) Goel(1988), Jain,

S.K.(1965)Jain, S.K. (1965a) Jain S.K.(1986),Jain, S.K.(1991) Jain and Philipps (1991) Jain, Sinha, and Gupta, (1991) Singh (1992) Tirkey and Khan (2005) Foster and Johnson (2006).Dabur and Gupta, et al. (2007), Mahesh and Satish. (2008) for the present study for documentation of ethnomedicine of Tribes of Bastar.

We have referred Grigson (1991) Sarkar and Dasgupta (2000) for the reference of Tribes of Bastar.

On Tribes of Bastar:

Bastar is a melting pot of cultural behaviour for a long period the influx of population in the district is gradually increasing. The original inhabitants of the district are tribal folk viz Muria, Maria, Bhatra, Halba, Dorla, Dhurwa etc. These tribal folk are distributed sporadically in the district of which Abujh Maria are confined in North western part. Dhurwa are in south eastern part, Bhatra are confined in Indrawati plain in northern Jagdalpur while Halba are distributed in scattered in North and South Bastar.

A brief description of the tribes is given below-

The Abujh Maria (Hill Maria) : The people who live in unknown hills of Bastar district of Chhattisgarh are known as Abujh Maria or Hill Maria who are one of the sub tribal of Gond. In fact tribal people of Bastar are classified under the generic name Gond and they represent certain primitive stage and levels of development of our human society God which includes. Hill Maria, Bisonhorn Maria, Dorla, Dhurwa etc. They are non-vegetarian. Use mahua oil for cooking, sagopalm toddy and home made mahua liquor are taken by them. The Bisonhorn Maria, and rice is the chief cereals in such cultivation (Sarkar, Dasgupta, 2000)

The Muria : The Bastar the word Muria means aboriginal. According to "Elwin" the name Muria has been divided from mur means apalus tree or a root is More suitable. They are a subgroup of Gond tribe. There is a "Ghotul" which is an institution. It traces its origin from "Lingo pen" famous cult hero of the Gond. The unmarried boys and girls must be the member of it.

The Bison-Horn Maria : The Dandami Maria named as Bison-horn Maria by "Grigson" are originally a group of Maria Gond tribe. Who got a separate identity as Dandami Maria or Bison-Horn Maria because of their special type of head dress. Which is

consisted of a pair of Bison-Horn fitted with a cap made of bamboo stripes.

The Dorla : Dorla is a corrupt form of Dor-Koitor which means the koitor with low-lying habitat Koitor is a term used by most of section of the Gond tribe and these people are also a section of it.

The Dhuruwa : The Dhurwa are originally section of the community Parja who claimed a separate identity of Dhurwa by abstaining from taking beef from the beef eating parja (Glasjord 1862 and Tharu 1965) : In Bastar the etymological meaning of the term Dhurwa is headman of the village.

The Halba :The Halba or Halbi is a scheduled tribe of Chhattisgarh. The Halbas are the descendant of the old Pak Militia. In Chhattisgarh. They are a numerically dominant community in Bastar, Chhattisgarh area. The origin of the name of Halba is derived probably from halba. Some claim that the name Halbi is derived from Halburu a Kannada word meaning ancient. It is believed that they have migrated from Warangal in Andhra Pradesh along with Raja Annam Deo the founder king of Bastar.

The Bhatra :The Bhatra are distributed in the eastern side of the Jagdalpur Tahsil and in the eastern side of Kondagaon Tehsil of Bastar district. Russel and Hiralal (1975) mentioned that the word Bhatra means a servant as they served as watchman and domestic servant, they claim that they have migrated to Bastar from North India through Bastar along with the king of the last dynasty. They are a scheduled tribe. Their own dialect is Bhatri.

Forest of Bastar :

The Bastar District is abundantly and richly endowed with forest resources. The forest in this district can be divided into four belts, namely Northern mixed forest, central Moist Region, comprising of sal belts, Teak belt zone and the Dry region comprising of mixed forest.

The Northern mixed forests are found in Kanker and Bhanupratappur tahsils and this region is more important for minor forest produce rather than timber.

Sal is found predominantly in the moist region in Central Bastar. The western terrain is the most important where the best quality of teak is found. Dry forest region is interspersed the moist belt and teak belt beautiful confined to western and southern

district. The various type of plants found in Bastar forests are Teak, Sal, Bijasal, Kusum, Pules, Mahua, Tendu, Harra, Kahhu, Salui, Achar, Bhulra, Rohni, Amla, Khair, Samar.

The Major type of forest division are sal forests, teak forests and Bamboo forests.

The moist Peninsular High level sal Forest are the richest single forest in the plateau of Jagdalpur Here the maximum temperature rarely crosses 32°C and the average minimum temperature is 35°C. The rainfall varies from 1095 mm to 2079.5 mm and is received both by North East and South West monsoon.

In the following lines the remedies of diseases are discussed the tribal people mainly depend on their forest environment from where they collect the medicinal herbs, Plants, roots tubers, fruits, flowers, etc. to treat the ailments.

Methodology :

The People in remote tribal villages largely depend upon the folk medicines and household remedies involving mainly herbs. This practice is a way of life to them and is carried on from generation to generation. The tribes largely depend upon the phenomenally good memory of the practitioner who in turn provides free treatment to this natives without revealing the formula or the drug plants in use. In many cases this tendency of not to reveal the formula and the plants' names has resulted unfortunately the burial of this traditional knowledge system with the death of such a person. In most cases, especially in scorpion sting, snake bite and rabid dog bite, the administration of drugs is accompanied with chanting of Jantras and Mantras.

Through persistent rapport establishment and constant motivation during the course of surveys of medicinal plants used by the tribes in different studied villages the present information on ethnobotany has been collected carefully. Informants chiefly include the practitioner and tribes from old age group. Out of the accumulated information only 25 plants have been selected for the present manuscript.

The Universe :The information for the present study have been derived mainly through interview and Focused group Discussion and through participatory approach. Four villages of Darbha block i.e. Bispur,

Kurumkhodra, Podarichhapar and Gumarpal have been covered for the present study. The tribes inhabited in this region are mostly from Duruwa community .

Table -1 provides information about the sexwise population along with traditional practitioners in the tribe. The following table - 2 presents the folk treatment of disease of the tribes of Bastar .

Conclusion :

The Ethnomedicinal survey of Bastar revealed that Bastar is potentially very rich in medicinal plants which need adequate documentation and conservation. The medicinal plants are utilized by Bastar tribes in various type of ailment an organized systematic collection of medicinal plants like Guruch (*tinospora coroilia*) Kalabbuli (Andrographic Panicular) Munga (Moring-olifera) Charpak (Buchinumialansan), Kuhu (*Terminalia arjuna*) and Hodgod (*Vitis duatron gularis*) need to be encouraged. The Herbal Drug collection centres should be established in the tribal area, for bulk collection and utilization in indigenous systems of medicine. These medicinal plants should further be investigated for their active principles and tested for pharmacological and clinical trials on human's for their safe use and these studies may thus bring some light on new sources of drugs of herbal origin. By establishing Herbal Drug collection centre the economy of the tribal people can be improved. Ethnomedicine is an important source of alternative medicine having its huge importance for health aspects of the world in general and a developing country like India in particular.

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Tables Presented

Table-1: Sexwise Population along with Traditional Practitioners in the Tribe

| S. No | VILLAGE NAME | POPULATION | FEMALE PO. | MALE PO. | NO. OF SIRHA | NO. OF GUNIA | NO. OF SCHOOL |
|-------|----------------|------------|------------|----------|--------------|--------------|---------------|
| 1 | BISPUR | 556 | 267 | 289 | 3 | 2 | 2 |
| 2 | KURUM KHODRA | 521 | 270 | 251 | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| 3 | PODARI-CHHAPAR | 421 | 219 | 202 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| 4 | GUMARPAL | 1186 | 617 | 569 | 4 | 2 | 3 |

Table -2 : Folk Treatment of Diseases

| S.No. | Local Name | Botanical Name | Diseases | Way of Treatment | Tribes Involved |
|-------|--------------|-------------------------|-----------------------------|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. | Guruch | TINOSPORA COROIFOLIA | Fever | Extract of the stem of guruch is consumed | Halba, Bhatra of Bastar |
| 2. | Kalabhuili | AndrographisPaniculata | Fever | Whole Plant Extract Kalabhuili is taken | Do |
| 3. | Hiran Khuri | Convolvulus pluricaulis | Snuke bite | Root extract of Hiran Khuri are dropped in ear as well as root extract paste are rubed in the affected parts | Dandami Maria and Bhatra of Bastar |
| 4. | Jangli Kapas | Thespesia lampas | Irregularity inmensurat ion | Root extract of Jangli kapas is consumed | Bhatra Halloa of Bastar |
| 5. | Zintijhari | Abutilon indicum | Urinary trouble | Root extract is consumed. | Bharwa, Halba and Bhatra of Bastar |
| 6. | Charpak | Buchinamia Lansan | Wound due to burn | Paste of churpak bark is applied | DandamiMaria Bhatra of Bastar |
| 7. | Munga | Moringaoleifera | Herdache and blood pressure | Leaves of munga are boiled and is taken with water | All the tribes of Bastar |
| 8. | Kaha | Terminalia arjuna | Bone fracture | Bark of kaha plant is boiled and added with milk and | Bhatra, Halba, Dharwa, Muria of |

| | | | | | |
|-----|-------------|----------------------|--|---|---|
| | | | | taken | Bastar |
| 9. | Hadgod | Cissusquadrangular | Bone fracture | After grinding the stem of Hadgod pulp is applied on the affected parts. | Do |
| 10. | Neem | AzadirachtaIndica | Skin diseases | Neem oil is extract from the fruit and applied on the affected parts. | Halba, Bhatra, Dhurwa of Bastar |
| 11. | Chitrak | PlumbagoZylenika | Abortion | The root of chitrak plant is used. The scales and burk of the root are removed in a cotton which is mounted on a small stick and then the pulp is dizied and inserted into the vagina | Halba, Bhatra, Dhurwa of Bastar |
| 12. | Kalibari | Gloriosa superloa | Abortion | Root extract of kaliburi is consumed | Bison Horn Maria and Muria of Baster |
| 13. | Bagarlyata | Adhatoda vusica | Cough | Juice of leaf and flower are consumed | Bhatra, Muria, Dhurwa of Bastar |
| 14. | Bohar | Ficusbenghalensis | Cough | Leaf and fruit are used | Bhatra of Bastar |
| 15. | Vejribhata | | Cough | Fruit is used | Halba of Bastar |
| 16. | Bajradanti | Barleriapronitis | Dental injection | Juice of Root is applied on the affected parts. | Bhatra, Dandumi, Muria of Bastar |
| 17. | Tulsi | O cimum sanctum | Cough and cold | Plant extract of white Tulsi is consumed | Dhurwa, Muria, Bhatra, Halba of Bastar |
| 18. | Chota dudhi | Euphorbia thymifolia | Diarrhoea | Whole plant juice of chota dudhi is consumed | Dhurwa, Bison Horn Maria of Bastar |
| 19. | Satawar | Asparagus racemosus | Secretion of sufficient milk ofl in lactating mother | Root extract of plant is consumed or the root is directly consumed | Bhatra, Bison Horn Maria, Muria, Dhurwa of Bastar |
| 20. | Harra | Terminaliachebula | Yaws | Collect some Harra fruit, dry and grind them in to powder. Make a paste with a little oil and apply on the sores | Dhuruwa of Bastar |
| 21. | Lurjera | Achyranthes aspera | Safe delivery | Root extract of lurjera is consumed | Dorla, Dhurwa Bison Horn Maria of Bastar |
| 22. | Ghotatulsi | Scoparia duleis | Malaria fever | Flower, Leaf is consumed | Abujhmar |
| 23. | Daul | Woodfordia fruticosu | Health tonic | Flower is consumed | Muria |
| 24. | Kam Raj | Glossogyne bidense | Snake bite | Root extract | All community |
| 25. | Surpgandha | Rauvolfiaserpentina | High BP | Root extract | Muria of Bastar |