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Traditional herbal remedies in the treatment for infant diseases from the Shirpur Taluka of Dhule district, Maharashtra

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Abstract
Dhule district is a tribal district of Maharashtra state. The district is inhabited by 40% of tribal population, often with their distinct way of life, traditions, dialects and cultural heritage. The tribals have learnt to utilize local food and vegetable plant for different ailments of diseases in infant after centuries of tribals, often at the risk of loss of human life. Women specifically know the ethno medicinal values in traditionally used plants. Much of this wealth is preserved as an unwritten material medico of the tribal folk. Many tribal beliefs forbid them to unravel the virtues of the plants to outside world. But, it is also true that till recent little concerted efforts had been made to document this knowledge by detailed ethno botanical surveys. The uses of 19 plants employed for curing infant diseases among the tribes of Shirpur taluka of Dhule district is reported. Information provided here is hitherto unrecorded or new.

Keywords: traditional herbal medicines, infant diseases, Shirpur Taluka

Introduction

Plants have been used since prehistoric times for treatment of various ailments. The traditional systems of medicine together with folklore systems continue to serve a large portion of inhabitants, particularly in rural and tribal area regardless of the dawn of modern medicine. India has second largest tribal population was 8% of country's population, Maharashtra state has 47 scheduled tribal communities with 9.27% of total population of the state. 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. Shirpur is the tribal dominated taluka in Dhule district. Pawara, Barela, Tadvi, Kokani, Bhil, Dhanka are among the prominent tribal communities residing in the Satpuda ranges of Shirpur Taluka. Inspite of rich and diversified plant wealth there are very few reports of ethno medicine from this Satpuda forest of Shirpur taluka lies in Dhule district of Maharashtra state on the border of Madhya Pradesh. It is situated in 21°, 19 'and 17" to North latitude and 74°, 19, 49" East longitude. It is rich in vegetation composed of dry deciduous and semi evergreen species. The flora of Dhule and Nandurbar districts (Maharashtra) shows great biodiversity of plants (Patil, 2003). These districts are predominantly by tribals. There are few Publications and record from ethno botanical point of view (Karnik, 1966, Bhamare, 1989, Bagul and Yadav 2003 (a) (b) and Bagul *et al*. 2006, Ahirrao and Patil 2007, Bagul and Yadav 2007, Bagul and Patil 2011) [9, 6, 2, 3, 4, 1, 5]. However, studies on medicinal plants of Shirpur area are lacking except few sporadic references. Tribal are the inhabitants of the Satpuda area who are very poor people 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. The present authors have attempted to tap information on this line from one such taluka *viz*., Shirpur of Dhule district (Maharashtra). The present author to tap information from hitherto unstudied region. The present paper highlights the 19 wild plants used as medicines by tribals.

Material and Methods

The present author visited in Satpuda zone in Shirpur Tahashil of Dhule district mainly comprises Vakvad, Zendeanjan, Amba, Khambala, Rohini, Bhoity, Sangavi, Palasner, Sule and Khairkhuti. The visits were aimed at tapping ethano medicinal data from tribal peoples. Elder women or heads of tribals and other rural informants of various fields, like farmers, labourer of 50 - 70 ages were interviewed. Local plant names, medicinal recipes, doses and mode of application, plant part used, infant diseases treated were noted during different visits. They are arranged alphabetically followed by plant families and vernacular plant name, ethno botanical data is provided separately below. Identification and authentication of collected plants were confirmed by using flora of Dhule and Nandurbar District (Patil, 2003), specimens were deposited in herbarium of Department of Botany, SPDM Arts, SBB and SHD Commerce and SMA Science College, Shirpur, Dist. Dhule, Maharashtra, India. The enumeration includes botanical name, family, local name, plant part used, method of preparation, mode of administration and use of plant in infant disease.

Table 1: Enumeration of Plants

Sr. No.	Botanical Name	Family	Vernacular Name	Plant part used and mode of preparation	Ailment
1	*Allium cepa L.*	Liliaceae	Kanda	One teaspoon of bulb decoction for twice a day	Cough
2	*Aloe vera* (L.) Burm F	Liliaceae	Korphad	One teaspoon of Leaf pulp decoction for 3 days	Worm
3	*Apium graveolens L.*	Apiaceae	Owa	One teaspoon of fruit decoction for twice a day	Gas troubles in infant
4	*Basella alba L.*	Basellaceae	Mayalu	Two teaspoon of leaf decoction per day for 7 Days	Biliousness
5	*Cassia tora L.*	Caesalpiniaceae	Tarota	Half teaspoon of leaf decoction twice a day for 14 days	Teeth, fever
6	*Cardiospermum helicacabum L.*	Sapindaceae	Kanputi	One drop of leaf juice per day for 4 day	Ear pus
7	*Coriandrum sativum L.*	Apiaceae	Kothmir	One teaspoon juice of leaf twice a day for 7 Days	Remove intestinal worm
8	*Curcuma longa L.*	Zingiberaceae	Halad	Dry powder of rhizome applied externally to affected area	skin disease
9	*Cynodon dactylon (L.) Pers*	Graminae	Harli	Paste of whole plant applied externally to affected area	Skin disease
10	*Cyperuss carinatus R. Br.*	Cyperaceae	Nagar motha	Half teaspoon of rhizome decoction twice a day for 7	Diarrhoea, Teething
11	*Daucus carota L.*	Apiaceae	Gajar	10 ml of Root juice twice a day for 14 days	Jaundice
12	*Euphorbia antiquorum L.*	Euphorbiaceae	Nivdung	Half teaspoon of stem juice twice a day for 3	Cough
13	*Ficus racemosa L.*	Moraceae	Umber	One teaspoon of ripe fruit juice twice a day for 3 Days	Dyspepsia, Dysentery
14	*Oxalis corniculata L.*	Oxalidaceae	Ambuti	Leaf pulp applied on forehead	Headache
15	*Portulaca oleracea L.*	Portulacaceae	Ghol	Leaf pulp applied on inflammation and heat	Inflammation and heat
16	*Solanum nigrum L.*	Solanaceae	Komoni	Half teaspoon of leaf juice taken twice a day for 7	Rickets
17	*Tamarindus indica L.*	Caesalpiniaceae	Chinch	Half teaspoon of seed paste taken twice a day for 3 days	Whooping cough
18	*Trachspermum ammi* (L.) Sprague	Apiaceae	Owa	One teaspoon of fruit decoction for twice a day	Constipation
19	*Tridex procumbens L.*	Compositae	Dagadi pala	Leaf juice applied externally on wounds	Wound

Results and Discussion

On the basis of our field survey amongst the tribal and non-tribal women we have identified 19 different plants that were used medicinally for the treatment of infant diseases. Valuable data based on local identification, Part (s) of plant used, uses and availability of the plants have been recorded. Plant specimens have been processed for herbarium according to the standard methods suggested by Jain and Rao (1977). As far as possible plant specimens were identified by using Flora of presidency of Bombay, (Cook, 1908) [7], Flora of Maharashtra state (Singh *et al.* 2001) [11]. Nearly 60% populations of the Satpuda are tribal and remaining 40% are of lower economic categories. The most prominent and commonly used wild plants to cure infant diseases are mentioned in Table - 1.

The major sources of traditional medicine in nature, these medicinal plants are subjected to various processes and are then administered to the infants. After investigations, the author conclude that medicinal herbs are going to play a very important role in helping those trust rated by the modern allopathic medicines and suffering from its grave side effects, which is why tribes a rural people are looking back to nature for safety and security. Herbal medicines are cheaper, easily available and their method of preparation is also simple. There is no risk of any major side effects of these plants on the patients. Such traditional use of plants as medicine suits the social and culture need of peoples. The plants mentioned here are used as ethno medicines to treat the disease like indigestions, skin disease, cough, constipation, biliousness, teeth, Fever in child, ear pus, remove intestinal worm, jaundice, dyspepsia, Dysentery, headache, inflammation and heat, rickets, whooping cough, wound and diarrhoea.

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