



TRADITIONAL PHYTOTHERAPY OF SOME MEDICINAL PLANTS USED BY BANJARA AND GOND TRIBES OF BHIWPUR TAHSIL OF NAGPUR DISTRICT USED IN SKIN DISEASES

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to identify and understand the utilization of medicinal plants for curing skin diseases used by Banjara Gond tribes of Bhiwapur Tahsil of Nagpur District. A field study was conducted in Banjara and Gond Tribes rich area villages of Nagpur district of Maharashtra (India) during different seasons. Banjara Gond tribes of the study area were found to use 15 plant species of 13 families for skin cure. Among the plant parts used, the highest number was observed for the use of leaves to cure skin disorders. The most common skin diseases treated using medicinal plants are cuts and wounds, dog / insect bite, burns and sores, boils, blisters and abscesses, fungal infections, leucoderma, inflammation, pimples, itching. A large numbers of plants are being used for other skin disorders followed by cuts and wounds and boils, blisters, abscesses. In the information obtained, there were many details about the appropriate indication of each plant. For example, some plants are indicated to increase other's potency. There are also plants that are traditionally employed for specific symptoms or conditions that often accompany itching, allergy and other skin disorders. Thus researchers should observe ethnomedical information before deciding which kind of screening should be used in the search of drugs for skin diseases.

KEY-WORDS: *Ethnobotany, skin disorders, Banjara and Gond Tribes, traditional knowledge.*

INTRODUCTION

The tribal communities from various ecosystems use the largest proportion of biodiversity for their economic empowerment and health care. For sustenance of any specific biodiversity, the traditional knowledge of utilizing

medicinal plants must be in resilience of environment [7, 9]. Thus proper documentation of such knowledge is required in order to protect over-exploitation leading to severe environmental degradation [9, 10]. In view, of this, an attempt was made to explore the indigenous system of medicine for skin cure used by Banjara and Gond tribes inhabiting in the villages BhiwapurTahsil of Nagpur District of Maharashtra(India) However, there are only a few reports on the utility of medicinal plants in the treatment of specific diseases viz, different types of fever [17], dental health care [14], ear and mouth diseases and treatment of snake bite [19]. The skin serves many functions viz. protection, thermoregulation, percutaneous absorption, secretary and sensory. Skin ailments cause harm to people of different age groups, in various ways and account for 34% of prevailing state of India,diseases [4]. The management of skin disease is becoming a priority due to the association of skin opportunistic infections and human immunodeficiency virus infection / acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (HIV AIDS).

It has been reported that 92% of HIV infections are cutaneous and mucosal disorders [6]. Infectious diseases, particularly skin and mucosal infections, are common in most of the tribal inhabitants due to lack of sanitation, potable water and awareness of hygienic food habits [12]. These unhygienic living conditions lead to numerous fungal and bacterial infections, which have increased to a great extent due to the non-availability of safe anti-fungalanti-bacterial drugs for systemic infections. The traditional healers have prescribed various prescriptions of medicinal plants for curing dermatologicalailments such as itch, eczema, scabies and other skin diseases [3, 10]. More than 95% of traditional medicinal preparations all over the world are of plant origin. Use of medicinal plants in various tribal zones of India for treatment of skin ailments has been reviewed [10, 1, 5] and reported from different places [15; 16, 13, 9]. However, the traditional knowledge of using medicinal plants br skin cure by tribal groups Banjara and Gond tribes Maharashtra India) is not explored. Therefore, the present study was conducted with the aim to preserve the traditional knowledge of using medicinal plants for skin cure by the ethnic groups of our study area as indicated.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study area

The study area is situated between the latitudes 20 35' and 21 44 N latitudes and between 78' 53' and 80 east longitudes and is spread over the area of 61323.62 hectares of land, Banjara and Gond tribes rich area was selected as study area, which falls in villages. The authors concentrated their study in villages rich in population of these tribes. It includes 106 villages. The tribal communities that fall in the villages are Banjara, Gondi, Mana behaviour of which Gond tribes are dominant Pardhi.

COLLECTION OF INFORMATION AND SAMPLES

Information on the use of medicinal plants for the treatment of skin diseases was collected from the study area through field surveys, semi-structured interviews with selected knowledgeable elders and local vaidyas. The plant specimens were collected and identified, dried by using routine botanical collection methods and preserved for further analysis. The medicinal properties of plants were confirmed by similar uses from 35 informants. Plant specimen collected from field with their local names was identified with the help of regional and local flora and confirmed with the authentic specimens deposited in the Department of Botany NutanAdarshArts,Comm, And SmtManibenHarilalWegad Science College Umred for future reference.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Our study provides information based on 15 plant species of 13 families, commonly used for skin cure by the Banjara and Gond tribes of Bhiwapur region. Leaves are the most frequently used plant part followed by latex, rhizomes, whole plant, stem bark, stem, seed, roots, tubers and seed oil. The common diseases treated using medicinal plants are cuts and wounds dog / insect bite. burns and sores, boils / blisters / abscesses, fungal diseases, leucoderma, antiseptic, inflammations, pimples/ itching/ allergy, and plants for other skin diseases. The detailed information of plant species with their parts used as traditional medicine for skin problems has also been presented in Table 1. A number of medicinal plants are used traditionally by the tribal people to cure skin disorders. In the present study we observed 15 plants used by these tribes. The phototherapeutic uses of various medicinal plants have been known to the tribal people in different regions. Most of the people in Banjara and Gond tribes dominated villages, were almost free from serious skin problems. This could be due to their life style as they mostly remain exposed to environment. This may have developed resistance against skin disease pathogens due to use of traditional medicines followed by sanitation awareness measures which was lacking in the past [2]. This is a great change observed because old literatures indicated that these tribes used to leave such serious problems upon divine power [18].

However, we feel that the indigenous knowledge and practices of the Banjara and Gond tribes on utilization of plant resources as medicine should be reported and preserved before they get lost due to increasing integration. In the information obtained, there were many details about the appropriate indication of each plant. There are plants that are traditionally employed for specific symptoms or conditions that often accompany itching, allergy and other skin disorders This vast array of rare medicinal plants can be used for further research only if we ensure proper conservation of these endangered species. Thus researchers should observe ethno medical information before deciding which kind of screening should be used in the search of drugs for skin diseases which may also be a potential source of modern drug industries.

Family	Name	Local / Common Name	Parts used	Method of application
Amaranthaceae	<i>Achyranthusaspera</i> <i>L.</i>	Aghada	Leaf	Leaf crushed and mixed with ghee is used in deep cuts and wounds
Leguminosae	<i>Buteamonosperma</i>	Dhak/ Palas	Stem bark	Bark is burnt and the ash is applied over wound for healing
Cactaceae	<i>Cactus indicusRoxb.</i>	Nagfani	Stem	After removing thorns, the stem is heated and applied over wounded area to remove the swelling and pain.
Zingiberaceae	<i>Curcuma longa L.</i>	Haldi/ Termeric	Rhizomes	Paste of rhizome for inflammation, insect bite and wounds. Rhizome + Mustard oil paste for skin disease
Asclepiadaceae	<i>Calotropis gigantean L.</i>	Rui / Milk weed	Latex	Latex mixed with salt is applied on boils, blisters and abscesses to remove Pus.
Caricaceae	<i>Carica papaya L.</i>	Papita / Papaya	Latex	Latex is used to cure skin diseases.
Asteraceae	<i>Eclipta alba L.</i>	False Daisy	Leaf	Crushed leaves are applied on heel to cure fungal diseases
Lamiaceae	<i>Hyptissauveolens L.</i>	Bush mint	Leaf	Leaf juice is used as antiseptic
Convolvulaceae	<i>Ipomoea fistulosa</i> <i>Mart.</i>	Besharam.	Leaf	Leaf paste as antiseptic and leaf warmed in mustard oil is used against boils and inflammatory conditions.
Meliaceae	<i>Meliaazedirach L.</i>	BakNim	Leaf	Crushed leaves with water used against pimples, itching, allergy and other skin diseases.
Musaceae	<i>Musa paradisiacal</i> <i>L.</i>	Kela / Banana	Leaf and root	Leaves and potato paste is used for healing of

Family	Name	Local / Common Name	Parts used	Method of application
				wounds. Root paste is used to cure boils and blisters.
Solanaceae	<i>Nicotianarustica L.</i>	Tambakhu / Tobacco	Leaf	Leaf paste applied for curing ring worms infections.
Solanaceae	<i>Solanummelanogena L.</i>	Baigan	Twigs	Ash of dry twigs is used against dog bite.
Solanaceae	<i>Solanumnigrum L.</i>	Phophli	Leaf and whole plant	Leaf extract as well as cooked vegetable is used to check inflammation externally.
Rosaceae	<i>Rosa</i>	Gulab / Rose	Leaf	Leaf paste is tied around the wounds for 2 to 3 days.

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