

Ethnomedicinal plants used in stomach and intestinal disorders with reference to Panhala taluka

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Abstract

Panhala taluka lies in the Sahyadri ranges of Western Ghats of Maharashtra state 16°48'o" N and 78°8'o" E. It is characterized by black rocky basalt to reddish yellow coloured soil, with dense dry semi evergreen to moist deciduous type of forest. It is enriched with lush green hills, diversified flora and fauna. There are 130 villages situated within the taluka, most of them in remote rural areas. The local people dwelling there make use of traditional knowledge to cure local ailments. The paper deals with medicinal plants used by these locals for treatment of liver disorders. The data on ethnomedicinal plants is on the verge of extinction and special efforts are required for documentation, conservation and sustainable utilization of these plants. So a survey was carried out to collect valuable information on traditional medicinal plants. The information regarding use of plants, their botanical names and local names is described in this paper.

Key words : Panhala, Western Ghats, Ethnomedicinal plants, stomach and intestinal disorders.

Ethnobotany is a branch of economic botany which deals with the role of plants in the life of tribal people² "Glimpses of Indian Ethnobotany"³.

A number of tribal communities live in the remote areas of our country. In the dense forest pockets nature has been so kind that for thousands of years it has been possible for these tribals to live and rely on plants and plant products⁵.

They are dependent on plants for their

basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing and essential amenity including medicines. The tribals are using traditional medicine system for centuries. This branch of ethnobotany is termed as Ethnomedicine grooves of Tribal areas along the Western Ghats⁷, Pune.

Ethnomedicine has become an interdisciplinary science. Ethnomedicinal claims may aid in finding novel lead molecules for welfare of mankind and the data can be useful for further scientific investigations.

“Some interesting medicinal plants known among several tribal societies of India” Ethnobotany⁴. Scientist are now well convinced that ethnomedicinal claims can be successfully utilized as focal points for development of new resources in medical sciences.

India is endowed with rich wealth of medicinal plants Glossary of the Indian Medicinal Plants, CSIR Publication, New Delhi¹.

The indigenous traditional knowledge transmitted orally for generations is rapidly disappearing due to advent of modern technology and transformation of traditional culture botany in the process of urbanization. That is the significant reason why research in this field should be undertaken, other wise there is every possibility that the valuable data on ethnomedicine will be lost in near future.

Area under study :

Panhala is a famous hill fort village taluka/ town 3127 ft above sea level in the Sahyadri ranges. It is located 16° 48' North and 74° 8' East, 20 km from Kolhapur, in Maharashtra, India. It is characterized by dense dry semi evergreen to moist deciduous type of forest. The average rainfall is 75" to 80" per year. The temperature ranges from 34.4°C maximum to 18°C minimum in winter. It is enriched with lush green hills, beautiful landscape, fauna and flora. There are more than three thousand trees including fruits, flower, foliage, ornamental garden plants, grasses and medicinal plants. Panhala has not only been gifted with lush green cool nature,

birds, fresh air and calm atmosphere but a place with great history blessed by Shivaji Maharaj. It is endowed by natural beauty with many lakes like Someshwar, Sadhoba, Shivtirth, Nimajaja and gardens like Mayur Garden, Gopaltirth Garden, Tabak Van Udayan Teen Darwaja Udyan etc. Its historical importance coupled with being a hill station made it to be established and a taluka place. There are 130 villages situated within this taluka with a total area of 56,867.35 sq.kms. It includes many rural areas and many villages are impassable and remote. Because of rich fertile soil and good rainfall farming is the main occupation. Not only for food but they (local villagers) rely heavily on plants for their health care. Most of the local people make use of traditional knowledge and use different parts and products of the medicinal plants to cure local ailments such as skin infections, diseases, cold, cough fever, jaundice and liver disorders, snake and scorpion bites, cuts wounds, feminine or gynaecological disorders, stomach and intestinal disorders etc.

The following paper deals with plants used for stomach and intestinal disorders.

Several survey's were conducted through regular field trips in different villages and padas in the area under study. A prior consent was obtained from the knowledge providers at each location. The information on medicinal plants was collected through frequent interviews with the local physician practicing indigenous medicine (vaidus) villagers and local elderly folk.

The field observations included local names, uses, habitats and supportive specimens of tribal and local folklore claims. The data

obtained during these excursions is documented and compiled in a systematic study.

The list of ethnomedicinal plants used in treatment of stomach and intestinal disorders with their local name, botanical name, family, part used, mode of administration for medicinal purpose are given below : -

1. *Syzygium cumini* (L.) Druce (*Jambul*):
 - Family – Myrtaceae
 - Habit – Evergreen tree
 - Part used – Bark, leaves
 - a. Decoction of the bark – one cup in the morning and evening is given to cure – stomachache
 - b. Four to five leaves are chewed and juice is swallowed in case of vomiting.
2. *Terminalia bellirica* (Gaertn.) Roxb. (*Behada*):
 - Family – Combretaceae
 - Habit – Large deciduous tree
 - Part used – Bark
 - Decoction of inner bark- One cup in the morning and evening given for abdominal pain.
3. *Terminalia chebula* Retz. (*Hirida*) :
 - Family – Combretaceae
 - Habit – Medium deciduous tree
 - Part used – Fruit.
 - Powder of dried fruit – ½ teaspoon with warm water is given before going to sleep – for treatment against constipation.
4. *Bauhinia racemosa* Lam. (*Apta, Kanchan*):
 - Family – Fabaceae
 - Habit – Small deciduous tree
 - Part used – Bark
 - Infusion of the bark in water – taken in the morning for treatment of diarrhoea.
5. *Holarrhena antidysenterica* Linn. (*Kuda*):
 - Family – Apocynaceae
 - Habit – Small Tree
 - Part used – Bark, Seeds
 - a. Decoction of the bark – ½ cup in morning and ½ cup in evening is given in the treatment of diarrhoea.
 - b. Powder of roasted seeds – one pinch of powder is given twice a day for abdominal pain.
6. *Aegle marmelos* Correa (*Bael*) :
 - Family – Rutaceae
 - Habit – Slender Tree
 - Part used – Fruit, leaves
 - a. Extract of fresh half ripe fruit is used as laxative, digestive, and cooling agent.
 - b. Juice of the leaves is given in the treatment of intestinal worms.
7. *Cordia dichotoma* G. Forst (*Bhokar*):
 - Family – Boraginaceae
 - Habit – Medium sized tree
 - Part used – Bark
 - Juice of the bark with coconut milk – used to relieve colic pain.
8. *Acacia nilotica* (L.) Willd. (*Babul*):
 - Family – Fabaceae

- Habit – Medium sized tree
Part used – Bark, leaves, gum
Decoction of the bark is given in the treatment of diarrhoea and dysentery and associated stomachache.
9. *Carissa carandas* L. (*Karvand*) :
Family – Apocynaceae
Habit – Hardy flowering shrub
Part used – Roots.
Extract of the roots is used in treatment of stomach disorders.
10. *Artocarpus integrifolia* Linn. (*Phanas*):
Family – Moraceae
Habit – Large evergreen tree
Part used – Fruit.
Overripe fruit is given in the treatment of constipation.
11. *Piper longum* L. (*Pimpali*) :
Family – Piperaceae
Habit – Slender herb with creeping stem
Part used – Root, dried unripe fruit (berry)
a. Dried root locally called as pipal mul – is used in the treatment of stomachache and indigestion.
b. Dried fruits – are given in the treatment of indigestion, stomachache, gastric troubles and vomiting.
12. *Acorus calamus* L. (*Vekhand*) :
Family – Araceae
Habit – Tall perennial grass like monocot.
Part used – Root, rhizome
Infusion of rhizome – used as carminative, stomachic, in the treatment of flatulence and colic.
13. *Oroxylum indicum* (L.) Benth. ex. Kurz (*Tetu*):
Family – Bignoniaceae
Habit – Small deciduous tree
Part used – Roots
Decoction of the roots is given in the treatment of loose motions with white discharge (aam)
14. *Strychnos nuxvomica* L. (*Kuchala*):
Family – Loganiaceae
Habit – Medium deciduous tree
Part used – Seed.
Paste of the seed is used in the treatment of diarrhoea.
15. *Helicteres isora* Linn. (*Murudsheng*):
Family – Sterculiaceae
Habit – Small deciduous shrub
Part used – Root bark
Root bark powder is given in treatment of intestinal disorders
16. *Cassia fistula* L. (*Bahava*) :
Family – Fabaceae
Habit – Medium sized tree
Part used – Pods and leaves
Paste of the pods with honey is given to infants – in case of intestinal worm
- The rapid intrusion of modern civilization into forest areas due to urbanization is leading to deforestation.
- Therefore special efforts should be made to collect, record and store the valuable data on ethnomedicine before its extinction.

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