



RESEARCH ARTICLE

FOLK MEDICINES FROM MAHARASHTRA

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ABSTRACT

Based on survey of Maharashtra. The present work deals with Folk medicinal plants and plant parts used on various diseases by local inhabitants in Maharashtra. Visited places are Nanded, Mahur, Kinwat, Gokunda, Loni, Anandwadi, Parli-Vaijanath, Chakur, Degloor, Latur, Daheli, Nalwand, Bhagwati. Authors collected the traditional knowledge from local inhabitants. The information provided here is based on personal interviews of local inhabitants.

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INTRODUCTION

Maharashtra state lying between 72⁰6' 80⁹'E longitude and 22⁰1' - 16⁰4' N latitude covers an area 3,07,762 sqkm with altitude ranging from 100m to 1460m. It is sharing 8% of total population of country as per 2001 census. During extensive survey of some local inhabitants in various villages such as Nanded, Mahur, Kinwat, Gokunda, Loni, Anandwadi, Daheli, Parli-Vaijanath, Chakur, Degloor, Latur, Daheli, Bhagwati.

Authors collected the traditional knowledge about folk medicines used by local inhabitants. In earlier days the indigenous people of Maharashtra fully depend on both wild and cultivated plants for their food, medicine, shelter and other uses. They got knowledge of plants from their ancestors through oral tradition.

Such an important and useful traditional knowledge they acquire from Guru Shishya Parampara. In Maharashtra it was the condition that of the Guru this knowledge should not be used for making the money which is existing in villages in Maharashtra. The present communication provides information on new folklore uses of plant species from Maharashtra.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The information was collected through interviews and informal talks with village elders and local inhabitants of different localities such as Anandwadi, Kinwat, Mahur, Nanded, Gokunda, Parli-Vaijanath, Beed, Daheli, Degloor, Chakur, Loni, Bhagwati, Nalwand etc. Survey is carried away during Jan. 2006-07 Dec. A standard questionnaire was used to collect the data which includes local name, parts used, methods of

preparation and appropriate dosage administration and taped their interviews, recorded their knowledge of about folk medicinal plants used to cure various diseases. The help of local medicinal practitioner's also taken voucher specimens were collected relevant data recorded in field note book. The specimens were identified using different floras. (Naik, 1998, 1979; Maheshwari, 1980, 1989) Among 45 plant species being belonging to 30 families, the folk medicinal value of only plant species, which are used to cure various diseases, is presented.

Enumeration

In enumeration data on Folk medicinal uses of plants presented in the following sequences, Botanical name, family, local name, followed by plant parts used as a folk medicine against various diseases and mode of use in brief.

Cassia fistula Linn. (*Caesal piniaceae*): 'Rela'

- I) Leaves ground mixed with buttermilk and given orally against indigestion used by P.C. Jogi at Daheli Dist. Nanded.
- II) Leaves extract mixed with milk and given orally to cure mad dog bite. Used by Pandurang Jogi at Daheli Dist. Nanded.

Calatropis procera (Ait.) R. Br. (*Asclepiadaceae*): 'Ruchaki'

1. Leaves coated with castor oil, slightly heated and kept on mumps to cure mumps used by Madawi at Kinwat Dist. Nanded.
2. Leaves ground and juice applied externally to cure skin diseases. Used by Madawi At. Dist. Nanded.

Cissus quadrangularis Linn. 'Hadsankal'

- I) Crushed stem is warmed slightly and applied over wounds.
- II) Leaves given orally to cure colic complaints caused due to indigestion as well as increase digestion and to cure Asthma twice a day till cured. Used by Kadam at Nalwand Dist. Beed.

Asparagus racemosus Willd Med. (*Liliaceae*)

Dried root powder one tea spoonful, with warm water given orally used against blood pressure used by Sharma at Kinwat Dist. Nanded.

Piper nigrum Linn. (*Piperaceae*)

Immature fresh fruiting stalk is cut into 5-6 pieces and paste of the pieces with about 2 gm roots *Momordica cochinchinensis* is administered once daily for 4-5 days in infective hepatitis. Used by Mohamad Abdul Razak at Degloor Dist. Nanded.

Riccinus communis Linn. (*Euphorbiaceae*)

'Arandi'

1. 5-6 seeds Kernels given once in a week for 3 consecutive weeks for constipation used by Mr. Sardeshpande at Nanded Dist. Nanded
2. Seed oil with *Vitex negundo* Linn. Med. Leaves extract and *Asparagus racemosus* bark and dried root powder of *Withania somnifera* (L.) Dunal.(*Solanaceae*) this mixture filtered used for body massage to cure Rheumatic Arthritis used by Sardeshpande at Nanded.

Sida cordifolia Linn. (*Malvaceae*) 'Sarakbuti'

Decoction of roots with 1-2 drops of juice of shoots of *Scoparia dulcis* is given twice a day for a week in infective viral hepatitis. Used by Khan Tauphic Khan at Kinwat Dist. Nanded.

Vitex negundo Linn. (*Verbanaceae*) 'Nirgudi'

Fresh leaves juice (5 ml) mixed with glass of Luke warm water given twice a day for 8 days in chronic liver problems with loss of appetite used by Mohanlal Gupta at Mahur Dist. Nanded.

Phyllanthus emblica Linn. (*Euphorbiaceae*) 'Aonla'

Young fruits are powdered with country liquor and given orally to reduce blood dysentery, utilized by Mohanlal Gupta at Mahur Dist. Nanded.

***Saccharum officinarum* Linn. (Poaceae)**
'Purakhiyar'

Juice of culms preserved for 8-10 years (vinegar) is given 2 teaspoonfuls with equal quantity warm water twice a day for 8 days in case of jaundice used by Madawi at Bhagwati Dist. Nanded.

***Diplocyclos palmatus* Linn. (Cucurbitaceae)**
'Jefferey'

Dried seed powder given with buttermilk for 2-3 days to promote fertility in women. Used by Madwi at Bhagwati Dist. Nanded.

***Glycosmis mauritiana* (Lamk.) 'Tanaaka'**
(Rutaceae) Ban-Nimbu.

Fruit decoction taken orally, used against cancer of throat. Used by Sharma at Kinwat Dist. Nanded.

***Gloriosa superba* Linn. (Liliaceae)** 'Kallawi',
'Karihari'

1. Root powder with warm water given orally in case of stomachache. Also root powder is used as a tonic.
2. Stem tied on arm of women in labour facilitates delivery. Used by Ramrao Sonbaji Madwai at Bhagwati Dist Nanded.

***Murraya paniculata* Linn (Rutaceae)** 'Kamini'
'Kontakopali'

Decoction of leaves and tenders branches taken in body pain due to carrying heavy loads. Used by Madawi at Bhagwati Dist. Nanded

***Plumbago zeylanica* Linn (Plumbaginaceae)**
'Dhola chita'

Whole plant (50gm) 'Decoction' is made given twice a day in case of night blindness. Used by Nagnathappa Swami at Chakur Dist. Latur.

***Eclipta prostrata* Linn (Asteraceae)** 'Ghamra'

Whole plant brunt powdered mixed with coconut oil and applied on eyelids for

conjunctivitis used by Swami at Chakur Dist. Latur.

***Convolvulus microphyllus* sieb. ex.spreng**
(Convolvulaceae) 'Shankhpuspi'

Whole plant powdered given with milk 3-4 times a day for curing spermatorrhoea. Leaf extract given with milk for unconsciousness. It is also used as a brain tonic utilized by Jadhavat Loni Dist. Nanded.

***Zingiber officinale* Rosc. (Zingiberaceae)** 'Adrak'

Rhizome powder with turmeric powder, Jaggery and lime made pills. 2 pills a day for 20 days given in tuberculosis utilized by Jadhav at Loni Dist. Nanded.

***Ficus racemosa* Linn.(Moraceae)** 'Umbar'

Leaf juice with boil rice water and Jaggery, given twice a day for 30 days, in case of paralysis utilized by Gutte at Parli-Vaijnath Dist. Beed.

***Rhaphanus sativus* Linn.** 'Mulla'

One liter root juice mixed with alum powder and boiled in iron pot till it becomes thick make tablets given twice a day with 2 spoonful butter and 250 mg. Cows milk for 15 days to cure piles.

***Aegle marmelos* Linn. Correa (Rutaceae)** 'Bel'

Pulp of ripe fruit given orally twice a day about 500 gm till cured for injury by fire used by Sonamkar at Nanded Dist. Nanded.

***Allium cepa* Linn. (Lilliacae)** 'Piyaz'

About 100 g paste of bulb mixed with a little mustered oil and given in cough thrice a day used by Sonamkar at Nanded Dist. Nanded.

***Colocasia esculenta* Linn. (Asteraceae)**

Boiled leaves and petioles mixed with cooked rice and eaten in case of kidney stone used by Bapurao Gutte at Parli Vaijnath Dist. Beed

Ficus religiosa Linn. (*Moraceae*) 'Peepal'

50g Peepal leaves powdered and given twice a day with warm water on Bronchitis.

Aegle marmelos (L) correa. (*Rutaceae*) 'Bel'

Four teaspoonful root juice (25g. of root crushed in 10 teaspoonful water) is taken thrice a day for 7 days to cure fever. Half of a ripe fruit is eaten twice a day for 3-4 days to cure constipation and dyspepsia. Baswaraj at Parli Vaijnath Dist. Beed utilizes it.

Hypocarpus laurifolia (dennst.) slem. (*Flacourtiaceae*) 'Kadukbathi'

- i) Dried mesocarpe of fruit powdered given orally with warm water thrice a day in case of diabetes due to this sugar level decreases through urine stop eating when sugar stops to come through urine.
- ii) Dried seed powder paste is applied on wound it stops bleeding through wound. It is utilized by Patil at Loni Tq. Kinwat Dist. Nanded.
- iii) 5-6 drops of seed oil taken with milk twice a day and also it is mixed with butter milk and malished on chest in case of Tuberculosis. Utilized by Baswaraj-Vaidya at Parli Vaijnath.

Azadirachta indica juss. (*Meliaceae*) 'Kadunimba'

1. In case of Healing of wound is washed with Decoction of leaves then leaves ash with Coconut oil is applied on wound for healing of wound.
2. Bark juice 1 cup full with 4 tea spoonful honey and 2gm Adark rhizome powder all this mixture taken daily for 7 days incase of jaundice. It is utilized by Ramgade at Anandwadi Dist. Nanded.
3. Fresh leaves eaten at morning for one month in case of diabetes.
4. Leaves powdered and applied to eyelids in case of hair fall of eyelids.

5. Paste of leaf with equal quantity of rock salt and turmeric given for constipation about 35 gm once in morning for a week.
6. Infusion of leaves used for body wash at least once a week to repel external parasites like lice, fleas, bugs and flies.

Ziziphus mauritiana Lam (*Rhamnaceae*) 'Bor'

Fruit powder 10 gm mixed with equal quantity of jaggery and given early in the morning to treat bleeding leucorrhoea. Utilized by Ramgde at Anandwadi Tq. Kinwat Dist. Nanded

Amomum fenzlii Kurz (*Zingiberaceae*)

Paste of its stem, leaves and flowers and bee-repellent Nicobarese use roots and flowers for fever and stomach disorders. Paste of it taken 2-3 times a day. Used by Ramgade H.G. at Anandwadi Dist. Nanded.

Aloe barbadensis Mill (*Lilliaceae*) 'Ghiukumari'

1. Leaf pulp about 10gm mixed with salt given as preventive of miscarriage twice a day weekly, until delivery. Used by Mohanlal Gupta at Mahur Dist. Nanded.
2. Leaf pulp with double quantity of curd given for born injuries about 200ml thrice a day also applied externally in injuries.

Dalbergia sissoo Roxb. ex. Dc. (*Fabaceae*) 'Sisau'

Paste of about 200 g. leaves with little common salt given for diarrhoea, twice daily for 3 days. Used by P. Baswaraj Vaidya at Parli Vaijnath Dist. Beed.

Calatropis gigantea (L) Dryand (*Asclepiadaceae*)

- i) Young roots used as toothbrush root bark powder applied in teeth cavity thrice a day for 4 days in case of toothache.
- ii) 1 to 15 latex drop on thorn injury. Used by Sangram Gutte at Parli Vaijnath.

Thespesia populnea (Roxb.) 'Kostel'
Parshipimple' (Malvaceae)

1. 75gms stem bark paste in 100ml water 30 gm paste and 30 ml honey mixed together given thrice a day 2-5 days for uterine problems.
2. Flower powder 5 gm with 100 ml milk given daily at morning for 15 days to regulate menstruation cycle. Madawi N. R. at Kinwat Dist. Nanded uses it.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

While exploring the vegetation of Maharashtra from floristic and ethnobotanical points of view, the authors came across some interesting points, which are directly or indirectly used by rural folks for curing various common diseases. The tribals and atribals of rural areas of the district possess good knowledge about the diagnosis and treatment of several diseases, encountered by them in their day to day life. It is also found that many plants are used to cure one disease whereas as one and the same plant is used to cure many diseases. People having different localities also have traditional knowledge which have common base during the survey. It has also been observed that, though the tribes are of different culture, religions, casts different even then, their knowledge, belief, faith, altitude basic life problems are having common base. Same has been reported by Dr. Kale S.B. and Dr. Sow Kale U.S. in about the intellectual rights and Ethnobiological research.

Conclusion

The present work shows folk medicinal plant species had been commonly used against various diseases such as jaundice, kidney stone, injuries, bleeding leucorrhoea, piles, dysentery, loss of appetite etc. Folk medicinal plant species either singly or in combination with another plants or plant parts. Different local inhabitants from different places of Maharashtra utilize these. The study area remained unexplored up till now. From this work it can be concluded that, the study area was rich in folk medicinal plants in herbal medicines, which needs the attention of Botanists, NGOS and Government for their progress.

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