TITLE
"DOCUMENTATION OF HERBAL MEDICINE
PREPARATION METHODS AND REMEDIES PRACTICED
BY ORAONS IN JASHPUR (C.G.)"

INTRODUCTION

Ethnobotany deals with the direct relationship of plants with man. In the last few decades, ethnobotany has become an important thrust area of research for documentation and preservation of historical traditional knowledge at tribal level. Tribal communities live in remote and inaccessible parts of the country. Tribes are distinct ethnic groups usually confined to definite geographical area with a common dialect, are culturally homogenous and adopt a unifying social organization. The ethnic group or tribes known all over the world have their own culture, customs, social and religious, rights, taboos, totems, legends, folklore, folk tales, rituals, myths, food and medicine practice. Forests and plants play an important and vital role in their life style.

Ethnic groups of various regions of the world are the real custodians of nature's wealth and experts in herbal medicine. The traditional indigenous knowledge transferred orally for centuries is fast disappearing because of the technological development and changing culture of ethnic groups (Ganeshan, et al. 2004). In spite of all these disturbances the indigenous phytocure methods are restored among the tribes, as it is part of their culture. Moreover the people in ethnic tribes are averse to change the mode of their life and traditions, but this traditional knowledge is slowly diminishing, so it is to be preserved and preserved in various form for future generation (Burman and Naidu, 2007). The indigenous groups possess their own distinct culture, religious rites, food habit and rich knowledge of traditional medicine (Harsha et al. 2001, 2003).

Today in urban areas human beings are removed from the benefits of plants, whereas in tribal areas people still live with much dependence on plants. Jashpur is one such area in Chhattisgarh, where tribal people live with nature in total harmony. Their health and livelihood security of tribals is much dependent on plants. They know the importance of plants and forests for their survival, hence practicing sustainable use of plant resources.

One important current concern of ethnobotanical research is the potential use of the plants as medicine, a knowledge that is often exclusive to the specific communities and linked to the local flora. The fund of the knowledge developed over the millennia by thousands of ethnic groups is largely unrecorded and faces the danger of becoming extinct. Our urgent concern is to preserve, refine and use their information for more effective management of health.

Ethnobotanical studies are now in progress worldwide. Many projects are aimed at the documentation of traditional knowledge about plants. In Africa traditional agriculture knowledge is increasingly incorporated into rural development programmes.
A BRIEF REVIEW OF WORK ALREADY DONE IN THE FIELD


NOTEWORTHY CONTRIBUTION IN THE FIELD OF PROPOSED WORK

Ford (1978) wrote a paper relating anthropology to ethnobotany with title “Ethnobotany Historical Diversity and Synthesis”. Indian botanist Jain published number of valuable publications on Ethnobotany and folklore medicine in India. He worked on tribes of Madhya Pradesh, Bihar and Assam.
Ethnobotanical research unfolds new vistas of traditional medicine in India (1979) and role of folk beliefs and practices in promoting health and combating diseases are his valuable work. He compiled nearly hundred indigenous medicinal plants with authentic information on their distribution, plant parts used and the medicinal and other uses. Islam (1999) studied the ethnobotany of Asteraceaeous plant.

Jashpur of Chhattisgarh state will be selected as a study site for the proposed work. Jashpur is situated in the North-east part of Chhattisgarh state. It is located between 22 degree 2' at north latitude to 23 degree 16' at north longitude and 83 degree 28' at east longitude. The total area of Jashpur is 5322.67 sq. km. The forest area is dominated by a number of tribes like the 'Oraon' tribe, who depend on the forests for their food and medicines. These tribal people use plants and herbs and their preparations for the treatment of their health problems. This study will be conducted in order to document the various traditional herbal medicines, especially prevalent in the 'Oraon' tribe of Jashpur.

OBJECTIVES

1. Survey of the study area.
2. Personal survey of people and interview them with a questionnaire to record.
3. The tribal to be interviewed will belong to Oraon tribe.
4. Documentation of specific health problems of Oraon tribe community.
5. Identification of medicinal plants.
7. Documentation of specific formulations, methods of medicine preparation and dose administration.
8. Herbarium preparation for medicinal plants.
9. Photography of medicinal plants in the study area.

PROPOSED METHODOLOGY

1. Survey:
   - Personal visits: Personal visit will be made in the Jashpur of Chhattisgarh state.
   - Personal interviews: Personal interviews will be conducted with the knowledgeable persons viz. vintagamans, baidyns, gunias, folk healers, traditional health practitioners.
2. Documentation of local health tradition for different ailments.
3. Identification and use of medicinal plants.
EXPECTED OUTCOME OF THE PROPOSED WORK

- The socio-economic data of the proposed study will be useful for the Government and non-Government bodies for the improvement of the condition of the tribals in Jashpur.
- An ethno-botanical study will prove that there is an urgency of orally preserved knowledge of the tribals to be documented properly before it is lost forever in the fast-growing modern world.
- The drug preparation and administration methods will be worth information for the medicine practitioners for easier and cheaper treatments.
- The raw material for the drug will be easily available and affordable to the tribals with the added benefit of higher efficacy and no after effects.
- The traditional herbal treatment knowledge requires to be popularized amongst the rural people.
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