

Ethnophytological Magic Therapies Used by Tribal People of Sehore District of M.P.

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Abstract: Tribal communities in Madhya Pradesh, India, including those in the Sehore district, possess a rich tradition of utilizing medicinal plants for both treatment and prevention of various illnesses and ailments. Their knowledge, often incorporating a belief in the “magicotherapeutic properties” of plants, has been passed down orally through generations. However, this valuable traditional knowledge faces the risk of being lost due to several factors, including the oral nature of its transmission and a decline in interest among younger generations. In an effort to preserve and document this invaluable heritage, an attempt has been made to document 32 such ethnophytomagico-therapeutics belonging to 26 families, along with 41 folk-claims. Studies on the ethnobotany of Sehore have revealed that tribal communities utilize plants to address a wide range of health issues, including skin diseases, fever, stomach disorders, respiratory problems, snake bites, scorpion stings, gynecological issues, and wound healing. Documenting this traditional knowledge is crucial for several reasons: it preserves a unique cultural heritage, enables wider dissemination of knowledge, facilitates research and development of new drugs, and empowers local communities to make informed decisions about their healthcare and traditional practices. Documentation efforts also play a vital role in protecting this knowledge from biopiracy and ensuring that communities are recognized and benefit from their intellectual property. The present paper reports 32 ethno-medicinal plants of Sehore district of M.P. which is used by the villagers.

Keywords : Tribe, Ethnophytomagicotherapeutics, Ethnobotany, ethno-medicinal plants.

Introduction - Ethnophytomagicotherapeutics are plants which are when touched, kept within, worn or tied on body give magic like effect in cure and prevention of various diseases and troubles (Kumar, 2004). India is the country of villages. More than seventy percent population of India resides in villages. Villagers, especially scheduled tribes generally live in surrounding flora and fauna of ecofriendly nature with peace and harmony. They have enormous knowledge about medicinal uses of plants. Ethnomedicines attribute a methodology to use medicinal plant, different diagnostic ways and a combination of two or more herbs together (Kanta et al. 2018). The practice of oral tradition is still prevalent among tribes. They have strong believe in supernatural power of plants. This knowledge is undocumented except Singh and Maheshwari (1989), Pandey et al. (1999), Singh and Singh (2001), Kumar et al. (2003a,b, 2005 and 2006) and transmitted through oral traditions from generation to generation. Similarly observations on ethno-medicinal use of herbal plants based on different ethnic communities of the country have been reported earlier which emphasized the need of such studies for exploring more and more hidden informations. Saxena Lal et al., (1994), Malviya et al., (2008), Manjunath et al.,

(2006), Patel (2007). Shetty et al., (2007) have evaluated the wound healing effect of alcoholic extract of *Ocimum sanctum*. Recently, Sharma et al., (2010) have also reported the Ethnomedicinal study of edible plants used by Gond and Bharia tribes of Chhindwara district of M.P. Looking to the wide occurrence of burn wound in the modern societies and the ointments used showing irritation on skin. Recently due to various reasons both natural resources (forest and vegetation) and tribal cultures are depleting at an alarming rate, therefore, the present study was undertaken for documentation.

Study Area : Sehore stands in the foothills of Vindhyachal Range in the middle of Malwa region. According to the 2011 census Sehore district has a population of 1,311,332. Scheduled Tribes make up 20.69% and 11.10% of the population. Sehore district is 39 km away from state capital Bhopal towards south and situated on Bhopal- Indore highway. District area is 6578 kmsq The District lies between 22°31' to 22°40' North latitude and 76 °22' to 78°08' East longitude. Its hight from sea-level is 1500 ft-2000ft. It is surrounded by 7 districts i.e. Bhopal, Raisen, Hoshangabad, Dewas, Shajapur, Rajgarh, and Harda. The lacquer bangles of the district are a coveted adornment of the Gond, Bhiala,

Nad, Korku, Keer, Paradhi tribes of the region. Although these people are very poor but they have their unique culture and life style. They depend on the plants for day-to-day medicinal purposes. There is only one territorial forest division in the district namely Sehore forest division, which has been selected for GIM. The forests of Sehore district are Tropical Dry Deciduous forest. Teak is a major species of the forest and a large area belongs to teak forest. Rest of the forests are mixed forest with rich biodiversity.

Methodology: Extensive and intensive survey were made in tribal areas of sehore district between 2023-2024 to collect the Ethno-medicinal information and herbarium specimen. Altogether, 28 villages were covered during the present study. The plant listed in table 1 have been collected after one year survey of the remote villages of Sehore district and the knowledge gained from the local peoples. All the ethnophytomagicotherapeutics and associated folk-claims were collected either by contacting the local healers, village headmen, elderly persons, and persons having thorough knowledge of plants or influences during field work. After identifying the plants having magicotherapeutic value knowledgeable persons were interviewed for various ethnobotanical aspects i.e. utilization, domestication, conservation and phytoworship practices for each plant and recorded in the field note book. Residents of different villages confirmed the information's gathered. The methodology described by Rao (1989) was followed. The collected plant specimens were made into herbarium following Jain and Rao (1967) and identified with the help of various flora and literatures (Singh, 1991; Duthie, 1960; Kanjilal, 1933 and Shukla, 1991)

Result And Discussion: During present study, 32 ethnophytomagicotherapeutics with 41 folk-claims were documented in form of table which are enumerated alphabetically according to their botanical names followed by family in parenthesis, vernacular name (V), special feature (S.F.) and utilization.

(Table see in next page)

Discussion: These tribes have superstitious believes on some plants. During present study, it was observed that 32 plant species are touched/ tied on the body or worn around the neck to cure various diseases and ailments. These plant species are used to prevent abortion, to achieve easy delivery, eye problem, fever, evil eyes and evil spirits, antidote for snake and scorpion bite, sun stroke, Arthritis, Hydrocoele, toothache, cough, to increase sexual power of man, dysentery, Jaundice, to test the sex of progeny, to

induce sleep and respiratory problems.







In recent times, the relevance of ethnopharmacology is increasing day by day. Medicinal plant drug formulations are the symbol of purity and safety when compared with synthetic drugs. The specific mechanisms by which these plants exert their effects are currently unknown and require further scientific investigation. Chemical analysis is crucial to identify and isolate bioactive compounds within these plants, potentially leading to new drug discoveries.







This research highlights the intersection of traditional knowledge, cultural beliefs, and the potential for scientific advancements. The importance of ethnopharmacology, the study of traditional medicine's biological and pharmacological effects, is increasing in this context. It can serve as a bridge between sustainable development and biodiversity conservation, ensuring the preservation and responsible utilization of these valuable plant resources for future generations.








These valuable medicinal plants necessitate conservation efforts and responsible utilization. Exploring their ethnopharmacological uses and conducting new phytochemical studies could lead to discovering novel bioactive compounds. Planting these medicinal species in forests and community areas is vital for their conservation and for ensuring sustainable development.







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S.	Botanical Name, Family, Vernacular Name	Magicotherapeutic Uses	Images
1.	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i> L. (Amaranthaceae), V: Latzeera, Lahchichira	Leaf, collected only on Sunday, are mixed with 'gur' to form pills and given orally twice a day in intermittent fever. Root, tied with the left side hair of women in labour to achieve easy delivery and also tied in the waist to cure dysentery Root piece, worn in right year to keep scorpions away.	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-NC</small>
2.	<i>Aegle mormelos</i> (L). Corr. (Rutaceae), V: Bel	Allium cepa L. (Liliaceae), V: Piyaz Twig with fruit intact; hung on the southern wall of home after delivery to keep evil spirits away. Wood; kept on burning at the door of delivery room to protect the new born and mother from evil spirits.	
3.	<i>Allium cepa</i> L. (Liliaceae), V: Piyaz	Bulb is said to prevent from sun stroke (Loo) when kept within in summer	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA</small>
4.	<i>A. sativum</i> L. (Liliaceae) V: Lahsun	Bulb; base of 7 bulblets are, touched with sty one by one and kept in shade to cure sty of eye.	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA</small>
5.	<i>Azadirachta indica</i> A. Juss. (Meliaceae), V: Neem	Wood; used to fumigate vagina on Sunday or Tuesday as protective measure against abortion. Tree trunk; embraced 7 times by scorpion stinged victim to make poison ineffective	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA</small>
6.	<i>Bacopa monnieri</i> (L) Penn. syn. <i>Herpestis monnieri</i> (L) HBK (Scrophulariaceae) V : Brahmi	A poultice of boiled plant is applied externally on chest of child to cure cough.	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA</small>

7.	<i>Beta vulgaris</i> L. (Chenopodiaceae), V: Chukander	Leaf; 2-3 drops juice put into nostrils of pregnant woman on Tuesday morning, to ascertain the sex of child in her womb. If she sneezes, the child is male otherwise female.	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY</small>
8.	<i>Brassica campestris</i> L. (Brassicaceae), V: Sarson	Seed; 5 gm with 'lohbaan' is used to fumigate victim suffering from evil eyes on Sunday and Tuesday.	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY</small>
9.	<i>Butea monosperma</i> (Lamk.) Taub. (Fabaceae), V: Palas, Dhak	Dried flowers; soaked in water and this water is used to take bath as preventive measure against sunstroke.	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY</small>
10.	<i>Calotropis gigantea</i> (L.) Br., (Asclepiadaceae), V: Safed Madar, Akahuwa	Leaf; two and half put on forehead of woman in labour to achieve easy delivery.	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY</small>
11.	<i>Datura metel</i> L. (Solanaceae), V: Dhatoora	Seeds; wrapped into cloth made into belt and tied on waist of pregnant woman, to prevent abortion.	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA</small>
12.	<i>Euphorbia antiquorum</i> L. (Euphorbiaceae), V: Sehund	Latex; applied over navel to achieve easy delivery	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA</small>

13.	<i>Emblica officinalis</i> Gaertn. Syn. <i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> L. (Euphorbiaceae),	A small piece of twig is worn into neck on Tuesday to cure toothache	
14.	<i>Holoptelea integrifolia</i> (Roxb.) Planch. (Ulmaceae), V: Chilbil	Stem bark; made into pouch, tied on arm to cure hydrocoele.	
15.	<i>Loranthus longiflorus</i> Desr. (Loranthaceae), V: Banda.	Plant tied with door to protect children from evil eyes.	
16.	<i>Launaea procumbens</i> (Roxb.) Ram. and Raj. (Asteraceae), V: Bangobhi,	Leaf; paste applied over forehead of children to bring down fever	
17.	<i>Madhuca indica</i> Gmel. Syn. <i>Bassia latifolia</i> Roxb. (Sapotaceae), V: Mahua	Water, rice, flower and sweets are offered and seven round of tree are taken by arthritis patient with request to cure his\her disease on Monday morning.	
18.	<i>Mangifera indica</i> L. (Anacardiaceae), V: Aam,	Seven Leaves plucked from the tree along with leaf base and leaf base are touched 7 times with sty. These leaves are put under the shade. As the leaves dry the sty will vanished. (ii) Inflorescence; massages on hands on 'Basant Panchmi day', as protective measure against scorpion sting and snakebite for one year. (94	
19.	<i>Mimosa pudica</i> L. (Mimosaceae), V: Chhui-mui	Root; put upon head of bitterly weeping sleepless child for quick relief	

20.	<i>Nyctanthes arbor-tristis</i> L. (Oleaceae), V: Harsinghar	Leaf; paste is applied on forehead of children in fever.	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-ND 4.0</small>
21.	<i>Nymphaea pubescens</i> L. (Nymphaeaceae), V: Chhota Kamal,	Root; made into wreath and tied on waist of pregnant woman to avoid abortion.	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA</small>
22.	<i>Ocimum canum</i> Sims (Lamiaceae), V: Bantulsi	Stem; chopped into pieces to form chaplet and worn into neck to cure respiratory problems.	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA</small>
23.	<i>Ocimum sanctum</i> L., (Lamiaceae), V: Tulsi,	Leaf; paste is applied over navel of the mother to protect the baby in womb from evil eyes.	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA</small>
24.	<i>Ricinus communis</i> L. (Euphorbiaceae), V: Andi, Rendi	Slightly warmed leaf; coated with mustered oil is applied externally on chest and stomach to cure pneumonia.	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA</small>
25.	<i>Solanum surattense</i> Burm , f. syn. <i>Solanum xanthocarpum</i> Sch and wandl. (solanaceae), V: Bhatkataliya	Flower; stamens of one flower given orally at onset of rainy season to prevent conjunctivities in that year.	 <small>This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY-SA</small>

26.	<i>Streblus asper</i> Lour. (Moraceae), V: Sihoor,	Tender twig; made into wreath by wrapping threads and worn into neck to cure chronic conjunctivitis and inflammatory eyes.	
27.	<i>Syzygium heyneanum</i> wall. (Myrtaceae) V: Kat-Jamun, Rai- Jamun, Madanua	Stem bark; decoction is used to take bath as preventive measure from sunstroke.	
28.	<i>Tamarindus indica</i> L. (Caesalpiaceae), V: Imlu	Tender twig; made into ring and worn into left index finger of woman in labour to achieve easy delivery.	
29.	<i>Tinospora cordifolia</i> (Willd.) Miers., (Menispermaceae), V: Gurch, Giloy	Aerial root; cut into pieces, made into chaplet by wrapping string and worn into neck on Tuesday or Sunday to Cure jaundice. (ii) Aerial root; chaplet worn in neck as protective against snakebite.	
30.	<i>Trianthema portulacastrum</i> L. Syn. T. monogyna L. (Aizoaceae), V: Gadapunna	Root; tied in left hand on Tuesday or Sunday to cure malaria	
31.	<i>Xanthium strumarium</i> L. (Asteraceae), V: Kuthuru	Leaf; folded and tied at wrist of left hand to cure malarial. (ii) Seed; made into wreath and worn into neck of children on Thursday or Sunday to cure chronic conjunctivitis and inflammation of eye.	

32.	<i>Ziziphus mauritiana</i> Lamk. (Rhamnaceae), V: Ber	Leaf; 7 plucked from the tree along with leaf base and leaf base of each leaf is touched 7 times with sty and put under the shade. As the leaves dry the sty will vanishes.	 <p><small>This Content by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY 4.0 NC</small></p>
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