



AN ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY ON RELIGIOUS CULTURE AND MEDICINAL PLANTS BY THE LOCAL TRIBE OF CHANDRAPUR DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT: The present investigation was carried out in Chandrapur district, based on primary data collection from the field, from May 2020 to January 2022 to clarify the query about the relationship between religious culture and the medicinal plants. The use of plants as medicine antedates history. Almost all civilisations and culture has employed plants in the treatment of human sickness. They use various locally available medicinal herbs for treating diseases. Many people of the village were aware about the importance and use of herbal medicines.

Key words: - Religious culture, Medicinal plants, Chandrapur district, Medicinal herbs.

INTRODUCTION :

Anthropology is the study of what makes us human. Anthropology is the scientific study of humanity, concerned with human behaviour, human biology, cultures, societies and linguistics, in both the present and past. Plants have historically been represented by anthropologist as a green background of human activity and this plant blindness has been reflected in the discipline's research methods.

There are different views about culture. Culture refers to innumerable aspect of life. Most of the anthropologist define culture as the set of learned behaviour, beliefs, attitude, value and ideas that are characteristics of a particular society. From the beginning of the civilisation, people have been learning from nature. Due to changing environment of the habitats as well as travels to new place, people often used plants and their parts by using trial and error methods. The plants which were useful to cure different diseases were collected and domesticated. Culturally health and illness do not exist in social vacuum. The ideas and practices are

influenced by the culture in which they lived. The knowledge of health and illness of people as well as researchers is stem from the culture in which they reside.

In different community they celebrate many ceremonies and festivals linked with the religion, which control and binds the members of the community. This belief reflects that different community have deep sign of religious value of god and their ancestor.

Most of the plants which are related with ritual, ceremony and festivals are important on medicinal point of view. These plants species are used to cure different disease and illness of human being as well as their domestic animals.

METHODOLOGY:

The study was undertaken in Chandrapur district of Maharashtra state in India the survey was carried out to collect information on anthropological study on religious culture and medicinal plants. The information was documented involving field study by contacting and interviewing voids, ojhas.

During oral interviews, specific questions were asked and the information supplied by the informers was recorded in a field notebook. The data was verified in different villages among the interviewers. The knowledgeable informants was taken to field and the uses of the plant as given by tribal informants was recorded.

Information on plants used by the tribals for food, medicine, construction of huts, religious

view superstition, for fibers. Preparation of alcoholic drinks, magic religious belief was also collected. The original information given by the tribal was noted in the field notebook. First hand information that was documented during the study in tribal region was compared with already known, reported and published work of taxonomist, ethnobotanist and little known and unpublished work.

OBSERVATION:

Sr no	Local name / Family	Scientific Name	Habit	Part use	Use
1	Lasun / Alliaceae	Allium sativum	Hr	rhz	Antiseptic, antibacterial properties
2	Payaj / Alliaceae	Allium cepa	Hr	Peel	Antibacterial properties
3	Aaduwa / zingiberaceae	Zingiber officinale	Hr	rhz	Carminative, diuretic, loss of voice, cold and cough
4	Mula / Cruciferae	Brassica campestris	Hr	Seed	Stomachic disorder
5	Jau / Gramineae	Avena sativa	Hr	Seed	Energetic
6	Dubo / Gramineae	Cynodon dactylon	Pl		Relieve from indigestion, paste for cut and wounds
7	Til / compositae	Guizotia abyssinica	Hr	Seed	Oil use for burn, paste use for scabies.
8	Basar / zingiberaceae	Curcuma domestica	Hr	Rhz	Powder is used to treat swelling with lemon, cough, cold, tonsils
9	Tite pati / compositeae	Artemisia indica	Hr	Leaf, branch	Anthelmintic, antiseptic, diarrhea, abdominal pain, dysentery
10	Aam / anacardiaceae	Mangifera indica	Tr	Leaf, bark, latex	Bark use for stomachic disorder with mixing of schima wallichii, root is in diuretic, bark for urinary, branches for tooth ache, leaf for cough
11	Kera / Musaceae	Musa sapientum	Shr	Flower	Astringent
12	Rayo / Cruciferae	Brassica juncea	Hr	Seed	Oil is used in body ache
13	Tulsi / labiateae	Ocimum sanctum	Hr	Leaf, branch, seed	Stimulant, root for fever, juice of leaf for ringworm, leaf for cough – cold, seed for

					genitourinary disorder
14	Aanka / Asclepiadeaceae	Calatropis gigantea	Shr	Leaf, latex, root	Milky juice for body pain, pimple, other skin diseases. Juice of root for diarrhea and dysentri. Dried leaf are smoke through nose to relief sinusitis

In Hindu religion of Brahmin and Chhetry, they relate most of the useful plants on their religion, festivals and ceremonies. Some of the important religious plants are:

- Belpatra (*Aegle marmelos*)- symbol of god shiva.
- Bar (*Ficus benghalensis*) – symbol of Vishnu, purus.
- Pipal (*Ficus religiosa*) – symbol of Vishnu, prakarti.
- Sami (*Ficus benjamina*) – symbol of shiva, Vishnu.
- Tulsi (*Oscimum tenuiflorum*)- symbol of Vishnu.
- Kush (*Desmostachya bipinnata*) –symbol f Vishnu.
- Aamala (*Phyllanthus embilica*) – symbol of lakshmi.

RESULT / CONCLUSION:

Anthropological data was collected through personal interview with the tribal people and field work. The anthropological information was obtained through interaction with local people by conducting interviews and group discussion by participatory method. During interactions various questions were discussed and all retrieved information about medicinal values of plants was recorded in field note book.

From the above research it is found that different communities people use 14 medicinal plant species in their rituals. Similarly 7 important medicinal plant species are un avoidable components in their religious ceremonies. The detailed information of such

plant is documented and presented in the prescribed format.

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