

Ethnomedicine of the Gadabas, a primitive tribe of Visakhapatnam district, Andhra Pradesh

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Abstract: Though there are a good number of publications on ethnobotany publications on a particular tribe are not many necessitating the present study. The paper enumerates 62 medicinal plant species belonging to 61 genera and 43 families used for ethnomedicinal purposes by the Gadaba primitive tribe of Visakhapatnam district, Andhra Pradesh. Visakhapatnam district with an area of 11, 161 Km² (4.1% of the area of the state) is one of the north eastern coastal districts of Andhra Pradesh. The study area lies between 17°-34' 11" and 18°-32' 57" northern latitude and 83°-51' 49" and 83°-16' 9" in eastern longitude. The entire agency track covers 6, 298 Km² i. e., 56.4% of the total geographical area of the district.

Keywords: Ethnomedicine, Gadaba, Primitive Tribe, Visakhapatnam district

INTRODUCTION

Though there are a good number of publications on ethnobotany publications on a particular tribe are not many [1-19] necessitating the present study. The paper enumerates 62 medicinal plant species belonging to 61 genera and 43 families used for ethnomedicinal purposes by the Gadaba primitive tribe of Visakhapatnam district, Andhra Pradesh.

ETHNOLOGY

The Gadaba call themselves 'Mogililu' or 'Modililu' in their own dialect. They owe their name to the fact that its ancestors emigrated from the bank of the Gadabari (Godavari) river. As per 2001 census, the total population of the Gadaba was 36, 078 of which 17, 836 were men and 18,242 women. The low literacy level (36.63%) indicates educational backwardness among the community. They celebrate *Itukala Panduga* during summer and children enjoy cradle riding (Fig. 4). They also have their traditional folk-songs, folk-tales and folk-dances and perform the *dimisa* (Fig. 3) and *koppu* dances. They are fond of eating *boddungulu* (larvae of arthropods) (Fig. 6) available underneath the root system of *Phoenix loureirii* during the month of February.

Most of the Gadaba families are nuclear. Extended families are also found. Interpersonal relations in a Gadaba nuclear family reveal that the husband is the head of the family. He engaged in cultivation. His wife looks after the children, completes the house-hold chores (Fig. 2) and also

works in agricultural operations and cattle rearing. They use *dokis* (Fig. 5) made from the dried fruits of *Lagenaria siceraria* as substitutes for the spoons in cooking. Grown-up children assist their father. The brothers in an extended family work together under the leadership of their father. When the father dies, the eldest son becomes the head of the family. Conflicts and confrontations may arise during division of property. The eldest son gets a larger share than the other brothers. Succession to the village headmanship is based on one's capability. A Gadaba woman has no right of inheritance to her parents property. In addition to her household work, she also attends to agricultural work on their own lands. She participates in rituals and religious activities. She also contributes to the family income. Still, she occupies only a secondary position. They are fond of reverse smoking.

METHODOLOGY

An attempt has been made to report the medicinal plants used by the Gadaba primitive group. The information has been gathered from the local medicinemen, village elders, etc. during field trips (2008-11) to different areas of the 11 mandals of Visakhapatnam district. The medicinal plant species were identified and deposited in the herbarium of the Department of Botany, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the enumeration all the plant species are arranged with their family, local name, parts used and various uses for the treatment of illness and diseases (Table 1). A total of 62 plant species belonging to 61 genera and 43 families were reported for different therapeutic uses. Ethnomedicinal uses have been reported and this is the first hand exclusive investigation on the medicinal plants among the Gadaba tribe of the district. Most of the plants used in the treatment are herbs (24 species), trees (17 species), and climbers (14) and rarely shrubs (7 species). Fabaceae is the dominant family with 6 species followed by Zingiberaceae (4), Rubiaceae (3) and Acanthaceae, Anacardiaceae, Apocynaceae, Convolvulaceae, Flacourtiaceae, Meliaceae, Asteraceae, Orchidaceae, Lythraceae each with two species and others with one species each.

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Table1 Ethnomedicinal plants

Name of the plant	Family	Vernacular name	Part used	Use
<i>Achyranthes aspera</i> L.	Amaranthaceae	Kukkurudhanthi	Root	Giddiness, Indigestion, Piles
<i>Adiantum philippense</i> L.	Adiantaceae	Challi	Root	Allergy, Cough, Piles
<i>Anodendron paniculatum</i> (Roxb.) A. DC	Apocynaceae	Chedukura	Leaves, Tubers	Fits, Leprosy, Paralysis
<i>Argemone mexicana</i> L.	Papaveraceae	Yerri kusuma	Root, Latex	Dysentery, Liquid film in the eye
<i>Argyrea nervosa</i> (Burm.f.) Boj.	Convolvulaceae	Gummada mada	Root, Leaves	Hydrocele, Piles, Post-partum problem
<i>Atylosia scarabaeoides</i> (L.) Benth.	Fabaceae	Adavi ulava	Root	Contraceptive, Dysentery
<i>Begonia picta</i> Sm.	Begoniaceae	Notipullu mandu	Root	Sores in mouth
<i>Bidens pilosa</i> L.	Asteraceae	Aggichettu	Root	Oedema, Snakebite, Subjugation
<i>Casearia elliptica</i> Willd.	Flacourtiaceae	Girugudu	Root, Stembark	Aphrodisiac, Muscular pain
<i>Celastrus paniculatus</i> Willd.	Celastraceae	Palleru thivva	Stem bark	Burning sensation
<i>Cipadessa baccifera</i> (Roth.) Miq.	Meliaceae	Paradonda	Stem bark, Tender braches	Allegrty, Aphrodisiac, Fever
<i>Clerodendrum serratum</i> (L.) Moon.	Verbenaceae	Barangi	Root	Fever, Piles
<i>Commelina erecta</i> L.	Commelinaceae	Mandumokka	Leaf paste	Sciatica
<i>Cryptolepis buchananii</i> Roem. & Schult.	Periplocaceae	Palathiga	Root, Stem paste	Cough, Leucoderma, Teeth troubles
<i>Curculigo orchoides</i> Gaertn.	Hypoxidaceae	Nela tadi	Rhizome	Jaundice, Migrain, Rib muscle pain, Scabies
<i>Curcuma aromatica</i> Sal.	Zingiberaceae	Kasturidumpa	Tubers	Dysentery, Fever
<i>Cyclea peltata</i> (Lam.) Hook.f. & Thoms.	Menispermaceae	Chantimal	Tuber paste, Root	Gastric ulcers, Jaundice, Sciatica
<i>Dalbergia volubilis</i> Roxb. (Fig. 7)	Fabaceae	Maredutivva	Stem bark, Root, Leaves	Heart pain, Menorrhagia, Post-partum problem
<i>Dillenia indica</i> L.	Dilleniaceae	Revadachettu	Stem bark	Piles
<i>Drosera burmanni</i> Vahl (Fig. 8)	Droseraceae	Beda sudhari	Stem bark	Subjugation
<i>Drynaria quercifolia</i> (L.) J. Smith	Polypodiaceae	Rachilaka mandhu	Root	Fits, Post- partum problems
<i>Equisetum debile</i> Roxb.	Equisetaceae	Bedda Kandhiri	Root	Dysentery
<i>Eupatorium adenophorum</i> Spreng.	Asteraceae	Panti mandu	Leaf, Root	Tooth decay, Foetus movement
<i>Ficus religiosa</i> L.	Moraceae	Ravi chettu	Stem bark	Leucorrhoea
<i>Garuga pinnata</i> Roxb. (Fig. 9)	Burseraceae	Girugudu	Galls on the leaf	Goiter
<i>Globba racemosa</i> Smith (Fig. 10)	Zingiberaceae	Gundenoppimandu	Fruit	Heart pain, Stomach pain
<i>Glycosmis pentaphylla</i> (Retz.) DC	Rutaceae	Konda giluguru	Stem bark	Leucorrhoea, Piles
<i>Habenaria roxburghii</i> (Pers.) R.Br.	Orchidaceae	Osso	Tuber paste	Breast cancer
<i>Hynaea trijuga</i> Roxb. (Fig. 11)	Meliaceae	Yelakathoka karra	Tender branches	Aphrodisiac
<i>Homalium nepalense</i> (Wall.) Benth.	Flacourtiaceae	Cheduchettu	Stem bark	Puerperal fever
<i>Hoya pendula</i> R.Br.(Fig. 12)	Asclepiadaceae	Thigapappu	Leaf, Root	Eye infection, Prolapse of uterus, Heart pain
<i>Ichnocarpus frutescens</i> (L.) R. Br.	Apocynaceae	Palativva	Root	Galactagogue
<i>Ipomoea hederifolia</i> L.(Fig. 13)	Convolvulaceae	Kasiratnam pulu	Root	Cataract
<i>Lannea coromandelica</i> (Houtt.) Merr.	Anacardiaceae	Gumpena	Stem bark	Bone fracture
<i>Leea indica</i> (Burm.f.) Merr. (Fig. 14)	Leaceae	Chinnamokudu dumpa	Tuber	Liver enlargement
<i>Litsea deccanensis</i> Gamble	Lauraceae	Naramamidi	Stem bark	Body pains, Scabies, Sciatica
<i>Mucuna pruriens</i> (L.) DC	Fabaceae	Dulagondi	Root, Seed	Allergy, Helminthiasis
<i>Musa ornata</i> Roxb.	Musaceae	Adavi arati	Root	Ear ache
<i>Oroxylum indicum</i> (L.) Vent.	Bignoniaceae	Bapana	Root Flower	Fits, Leucorrhoea, Menorrhagia,
			Stem bark	Tuberculosis
<i>Parmelia perlata</i> (Huds.) Ach.	Parmeliaceae	Rathipuvvu	Thallus	Anti-emetics
<i>Peperomia tetraphylla</i> (Forst. f.) Hook. & Arn.	Piperaceae	Pansa pappu	Whole plant	Sores on the scalp
<i>Pseudathria viscida</i> (L.) Wt. & Arn.	Fabaceae	Batanku aku	Root	Prolapse of uterus
<i>Pterocarpus marsupium</i> Roxb.	Fabaceae	Yegisa	Stem bark	Jaundice, Menorrhagia
<i>Pueraria tuberosa</i> (Roxb. ex. Willd.) DC. (Fig. 15)	Fabaceae	Darigummadi	Leaf, Tuber	Head ache, Heart pain
<i>Randia spinosa</i> (Retz.) Poir	Rubiaceae	Manga chettu	Stem bark	Abortion
<i>Rhaphidophora decursiva</i> (Raoxb.) Scott. (Fig. 16)	Araceae	Athukuchettu	Leaf	Bone fracture
<i>Rhinacanthus communis</i> Nees (Fig. 17)	Acanthaceae	Todajada	Flower	Eye disease
<i>Rotala rotundifolia</i> (Buch-Ham. ex Rox.) Koehne (Fig. 18)	Lythraceae	Daggumandu	Whole plant	Cough
<i>Rubia cordifolia</i> L.	Rubiaceae	Mangala katti	Root	Leucorrhoea
<i>Rubus ellipticus</i> Smith (Fig. 19)	Rubiaceae	Gedarabba chettu	Root	Fits, Leucorrhoea, Menorrhagia
<i>Schefflera stellata</i> (Gaertn.) Harms	Araliaceae	Purugodi	Tender branches	Stomach pain
<i>Semicarpus anacardium</i> L.f. (Fig. 20)	Anacardiaceae	Nall geedi	Seeds	Cough
<i>Stemona tuberosa</i> Lour. (Fig. 21)	Stemonaceae	Banda beesa osso	Root, Tuber	Dysentery, Fever

<i>Sterculia urens</i> Roxb.	Sterculiaceae	Kovelachettu	Gum	Amoebic dysentery, Heel cracks
<i>Thalictrum foliolosum</i> DC.	Ranunculaceae	Piyaranga	Tuber	Hydrocele, Jaundice
<i>Thunbergia alata</i> Boj. ex Sims (Fig. 22)	Acanthaceae	Thalagudda teega	Root	Menorrhagia, Irregular menstruation
<i>Thysanolaena maxima</i> (Roxb.) Kuntze	Poaceae	Konda chipuru	Root	Piles
<i>Vanda testacea</i> (Lindl.) Reichb.f. (Fig. 23)	Orchidaceae	Mollandana	Whole plant	Bone fracture
<i>Vitis heyneana</i> Roem. & Schultes	Vitaceae	Mediki dumpa	Tuber	Fever, Sciatica
<i>Woodfordia fruticosa</i> (L.) Kurz	Lythraceae	Arepuvvu	Leaf, Flower, Stem bark	Cuts and wounds, Dysentery Jaundice
<i>Zingiber roseum</i> (Roxb.) Rosc. (Fig. 24)	Zingiberaceae	Adavi allamu	Rhizome	Fever, Heart pain, Ulcers in stomach
<i>Zingiber zerumbet</i> (L.) Smith	Zingiberaceae	Samida dumpa	Rhizome	Fever



Fig. 1-12. 1. Study area; 2. Gadaba women with water; 3. Dimsa dance; 4. Children enjoying cradle; 5. Dokis; 6. Boddigulu (Larvae); 7. *Dalbergia volubilis*; 8. *Drosera burmanii*; 9. *Garuga pinnata*; 10. *Globba racemosa*; 11. *Heynea trijuga*; 12. *Hoya pendula*



Fig. 13-24. 13. *Ipomoea hederifolia*; 14. *Leea indica*; 15. *Pueraria tuberosa*; 16. *Raphidophora decursiva*; 17. *Rhinacanthus communis*; 18. *Rotala rotundifolia*; 19. *Rubus elliptica*; 20. *Semecarpus anacardium*; 21. *Stemona tuberosa*; 22. *Thunbergia alata*; 23. *Vanda testacea*; 24. *Zingiber roseum*.

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