INDIGENOUS TECHNICAL KNOWLEDGE IN VETERINARY MEDICINE AMONG TRIBALS

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted among randomly selected 4 tribal villages of Binpur block and 4 tribal villages of Jhargram block of Medinipur district of West Bengal. From each village, all heads of Santal and Lodha households keeping livestock were selected for the present study. So, 204 heads of tribal household formed the sample of the study. The data were collected through personal interview schedules and observational techniques. In addition Key Informant Technique was used to find out the Indigenous knowledge which is mostly available among the oJhas (village medicine men). The different plants which are used by santal and Lodha tribes and their OJha for treatment of different diseases of animal were documented.

INTRODUCTION

India is one of the world’s 12 mega-diversity countries accounting for eight per cent of global plant genetic resources and higher share of micro-organisms, most of them undocumented (Bidwai, 1997). The traditional practices, the knowledge of tribal farmers and their innovativeness should not be ignored. Tribal people are the repository of accumulated knowledge passed on by word of mouth from generation to generation and thus, permanently record their experiences and knowledge in a form inaccessible to outsiders. Therefore as tribal groups disappear, their vast knowledge vanishes with them (Report of World Bank on tribal peoples and Economic Development human ecological consideration, 1982:15). The present paper documents indigenous technical knowledge in veterinary medicine among Santal and Lodha tribes.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study was conducted in Medinipur district of West Bengal because Medinipur district has a sizeable tribal population (75,10,917) and two tribal groups namely Santal and Lodha have been living there for a long time. From Medinipur district two tribal blocks namely Binpur and Jhargram were selected as Binpur has the highest Santal population (56,608) and Jhargram has the highest Lodha population (5251 i.e. 16 per cent of the total Lodha population). Now from Binpur block, four villages namely Kodopura, Nayanagora, Krishnapur and Asthajuri, and from Jhargram block four villages namely Chandabila, Dalkati, Dhadkidanga and Kalajharia were selected by simple random sampling technique. Thus, the total number of villages for the present study were 8.

From each village, all heads of Santal and Lodha households keeping livestock were selected for the present study. So, 204 heads of tribal households consisting of 102 Santal households and 102 Lodha households formed the sample of the study.

It can be mentioned here that as Lodha is a hunting and food gathering tribe, it was very difficult to get all heads...
Table 1. Indigenous technical knowledge in veterinary medicine.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Name of indigenous medicines</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(1)</td>
<td>(2)</td>
<td>(3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>For treatment of retention of placenta in goats</td>
<td>It is used by both Santal and Lodha tribes.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Offer leaves of Jack fruit (Artocarpus sp.)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>For treatment of diarrhoea in kids</td>
<td>It is used by both Santal and Lodha tribes.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Fresh green leaves of Babla (Kachi pata of babla) (Acacia sp.) and sugar</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Leaves of Bamboo (Bambusa sp.)</td>
<td>It is used by both Santal and Lodha tribes.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>For treatment of dysentery in kids</td>
<td>It is prescribed by Ojha (Village medicine man). They do not tell the names of plants; they go to the forest and after collection they grind it and mix properly and then give to owner of goats.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Juice obtained from bark of 'Banjam' (Aridisia solanaceasys) after proper grinding+juice obtained from Bon Kurchi (Holarrhena antidysentrica); Both are mixed and boiled to make a thick substance and drench it.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>For treatment of diarrhoea in goats</td>
<td>It is used by both Santal and Lodha tribes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Juice obtained from bark of Babla (Acacia sp.) and mixed with sugar</td>
<td>It is used by Santal tribe only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Juice obtained from bark of Sal tree (Shorea robusta)</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>For treatment of wounds of contagious ecthyma in goats</td>
<td>It is used by both Santal and Lodha tribes.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Bonrosoon (Alliaria sativum) and mustard oil after proper boiling on wounds of mouth</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>For treatment of cough and cold in goats</td>
<td>It is used by Ojha of Lodha tribe only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Juice obtained from roots of Isharmul (Aristolochia indica) after proper grinding and mixed with warm water.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>For treatment of cough and cold in swine</td>
<td>It is used by Santal tribe only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Juice obtained from bark of 'Chatim' (Euphorbia nerifolia) after proper grinding and mixed with warm water and drenched.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ii. Juice obtained from roots of Isharmul (Aristolochia indica) after proper grinding and mixed with warm water and drenched.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>For treatment of weakness in poultry</td>
<td>It is used by Santal tribe only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. Seed kernel of mango (Mangifera indica)*after proper grinding and mixed with half-boiled rice</td>
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<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>For treatment of retention of placenta in cows</td>
<td>It is used by Santal tribe only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>i. After proper grinding of mosoor dal (Lensculinaris medic)+Kutchha halood (Curcuma longa Linn.) then mixed with molasses and drenched.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

*It is used by Santal tribe only

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10. For treatment of fever in cows
   i. Bonrosoon (*Alliaria sativum*) +
      golemorich (*Piper nigrum*) and fruits
      of 'gourman' + roots of vetra tree
      and after proper grinding and mixed
      with mohua liquor and drenched.

11. For treatment of cough and cold in cows
   i. Drenching of juice obtained from roots
      of Iswarmul (*Aristolochia indica*)

12. For treatment of tympanitis in cows
   i. Molasses+ashes of oyster shell after
      proper grinding and mixed together
      and drenched.

13. For treatment of diarrhoea in cattle
   i. Juice obtained from bark of "Babla"
      (*Acacia sp.*) + juice obtained from bark
      of "Banjam" (*Aridisia solanacea*)+
      juice obtained from roots of "Aam"
      (*Mangifera indica*) and juice obtained
      from roots of 'Bonkurchi' (*Holarrhena
      antidysentrica*); all juices are mixed in
      water and boiled to make a thick
      substance and then drenched.

14. For treatment of abscess in animals
   i. After proper grinding of roots of
      Anantamul (*Hemidesmus indicus*)
      make it a paste and apply on abscess

15. For treatment of wounds in animals/cattle
   i. Kutcha halood (*Curcuma longa Linn*),
      after proper grinding and mixed with
      lime and apply in wound

16. For treatment of FMD in cattle
   i. 'Vela' seed (*Semecarpus anacardium*)
      after proper grinding and mixed with
      mustard cake and allowed to eat it

17. For treatment of hooves injury due to
    FMD
   i. Apply mahua oil (*Madhuca indica*) that
      is oil obtained from extraction of
      mahua seed.

18. For treatment of swelling due to injury
    in cattle
   i. Apply bark of Bandar lathi tree (*Cassia
      fistula*) after proper grinding and
      making it as a paste and apply on
      swollen region

19. For treatment of fracture in animals
   i. Harjora (*Vitis quadrangularis*) leaves and
      creeper after proper grinding and make
      it a paste and apply on affected parts
      and then fixing it with dry bamboo splints

It is prescribed by Ojha of Santal tribe only.
The Ojha does not tell the names of plants;
he goes to the forest and collects roots of
different plants and after proper grinding he
then offers to the owner.

It is prescribed by Ojha of Lodha tribe only.

It is used by both Santal and Lodha tribes.

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It is used by Ojha of Santal tribe only.
of Lodhas for personal interview. Therefore, to match with 102 heads of Santal households, 102 Lodhas were interviewed.

The respondents being tribals and mostly illiterate, it was decided to use observational technique, diary writing and photography besides the interview schedule. In addition, the key informant technique was used to find out the indigenous knowledge which is mostly available among the "Ojha" (village medicine man).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The different plants which are used by Santal and Lodha tribes and their 'Ojha' (village medicine man) for treatment of different diseases of animals are given in Table 1.

The data of the study showed that indigenous knowledge may play a vital role in treatment of animal diseases. So it can be said that advantages should be taken both from indigenous knowledge system and scientific knowledge system as complementary sources of wisdom. The traditional knowledge should be tested scientifically, and if found useful, may be used widely in veterinary practice. The study also indicated that there is a need for multi disciplinary study of indigenous veterinary medicine to find out the active principle of the plants used by the tribals so that package of practices incorporating both scientific and indigenous medicine can be recommended in tribal areas.

REFERENCES
