

Medicinal Plants using by Forest Dwellers for Common Diseases- A Case Study at Medinipur Sadar Sub-Division, Paschim Medinipur, W.B.

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Abstract :- Folk medicines are widely practiced and benefitted from thousands of years of experience by local knowledge of folk Practitioners and folk healers from the mythic period until today in tribal societies mainly. These persons have some skill power of identifying the origin of many diseases and disorders and the skill of using various drugs by the beliefs for the treatment with the help of information and practices acquired from the tradition. Those medicine adopted by the public when they are unable to go to doctors due to some social and economic barriers. The present paper deals the practicing of folk medicines by dwellers of Midnapore Sadar Sub Division in Paschim Medinipur District of West Bengal. The objectives of study is to understand the relationship of community people with the forest medicines and how they collect money from that process. To fulfill the objectives, firstly the villages have been selected randomly then household survey was conducted. Primary data has been collected by field work by standard questionnaire through participant observations, key informant interviews, group interviews and elder members of the family. Survey results analyses using Excell spreadsheet software. From the survey data it is reveals that traditional folk medicines are usually practices by native villagers mainly women than men because they have limited connections with the outer world. Some of them earn annual income from these processes. In every village one or two female member mainly elder members engaged in this practice who are specialized in herbal medicine or folk medicine. Their prescription is so important that the community people visit them regularly for consultation. They recognize extract of plants, shrubs, flowers, roots, leaves, barks, seeds, fruits, shoots in some sacred groves for curing the headache, stomachache, wounds, fever, dysentery, arthritis, pregnancy,

contraception tonic etc. They have their own knowledge about the medical value of particular plants in particular disease. Their expertise has also become a source of income because they usually charge some fees for consultation and preparation of medicine. Data was collected from 85 villages and 530 households around the block through random sampling method. From this study it is found that 25% medicine men monthly income from under 5000 and only 10% above 10000. These practices have some limitations mainly, there is no modernize institutional and organized set-up for their collection, processing, sale and their proper storing. Overconfidence sometimes creates major problems for some critical diseases. So in conclusion it is recommended that collection, processing of medicine and storing should be more process oriented, integrated and small scale industry based.

Introduction :- Rural households from their livelihood of developing world use food, fuel, fodder, construction materials, medicines and other products from forests and other natural, non-cultivated environments to meet subsistence needs and generate cash income (Saha & Kuri 2017), (Sagreiya, 1997). The extent of poverty and inequality requires the effective designing, development and conservation strategies (Clawson, 1987) (Diarrria, D) et al 2004. The use of traditional medicine (TM) and complementary and alternative medicine (CAM) has increased significantly over the past few years. Folk medicines are defined as regulated, opened, widely practiced and benefitted from thousands of years of experience (Fernandes, Geeta & Philip, 1988). These are extremely used by local knowledge of folk practitioners and folk healers. The WHO defines traditional medicine is the sum



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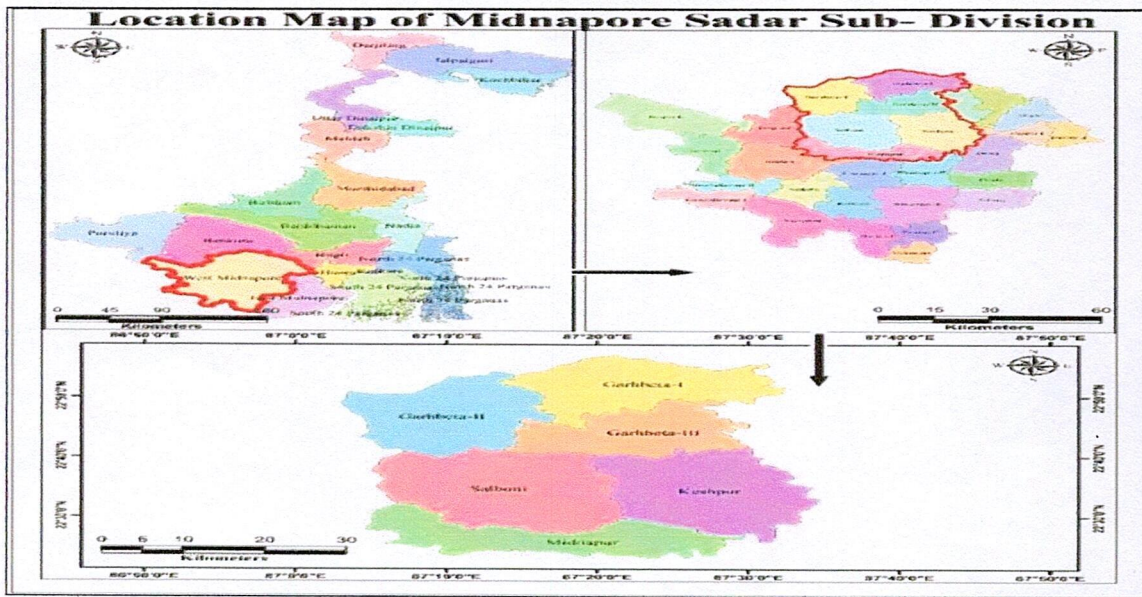


Fig-1: Location of the study area



Fig-2: A medicine men sells herbal medicines at market.



Fig-3: Forest dwellers collect Mahua (Madhuca latifolia) flowers from field

Ointment: Tribal women of pat region prepare some decorative ointment and use them as medicine to beautify their face, body and hair. Dhattura (*Datura metel*) is an infestation of the skin, hair or genital region caused by small insects called lice, which live directly on the body or in garments. Painful menstruation, also known as dysmenorrhoea, is a common problem of women in the reproductive age group. **Shatpushpa** (*Anethum sowa*) is used for painful menstruation. Palasha powder (*Butea monosperma*) for parasitic infestation. Gandhaka (*Sarcoptes scabiei*) Scabies is a contagious skin disease caused by infestation with itch mite It spreads by skin-to-skin contact with a person who carries the mite. **Lavanga** (*Syzygium aromaticum*) oil for toothache. **Gokshura powder** (*Tribulus terrestris*) for urinary disorder.

Diseases of children and use of folk medicines :-

There are some diseases which are related to only children. For example, (**Diarrhoea**): It is treated as very dangerous disease for the children. It occurs due to severe hot and cold. The mixture of Amala, Hare and Bahera with honey is served to the child. Food in liquid form with a pinch of salt is served to the child. **Tetanus**: Since in this disease the throat of child begins to get choked, this disease is called tetanus. This disease takes place after a few days of delivery. The oil of Mahua is spread over the chest and throat of the child. The child is given honey, black papal and juice of Ajawine in hot water. **Pneumonia (Cough and Cold)**: Pneumonia is also very dangerous disease for the children. In this disease the cough arrests the heart of the child and it dies. This disease attacks during the period of changing season. Pipal, Dalchini, Ilayachi, and Talmishri are mixed together. This mixture is served to the child in honey. Hot water is served to the child. The mixture of Amla, Hare and Behera also served regularly with Gur. Jayaphal (**Myristica fragrans**) is put in Mahua oil and rubbed on the body of the child. **Anemia**: The pregnant and nursing mother has to face the situation of anemia. Anemic situation arises due to lack of hemoglobin content in the blood of the women. The tribals of pat region do not have knowledge

about hemoglobin but they call anemia as lack of blood. In order to remove anemia stage, the tribal's of pat region practice some folk medicine prepared by them or by folk practitioners. A paste of nutrition roots, shoots, flowers and fruits available in and around the forest is prepared after boiling, crushing and cooking them in Mahua oil. From this paste mixture, small round pieces are made and taken as medicine.

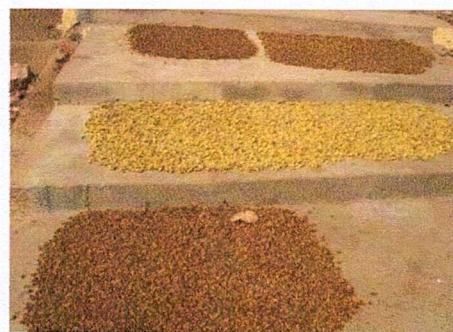


Fig-5- Medicinal products are drying.



Fig-6: Medicinal materials are packing.

Findings & Conclusion :- The present study reveals that the benefits are not equally distributed among the poor people. Some people are not able to derive and selling these product properly and manageable way. They face different types of problems in interior of the forest (attacked and wounded by elephant and others endangered animals.) Women and children are also not safety in forested area. Our findings also suggest that there is a need to pay empirical attention to get benefit equally that will automatically lead to