

Documentation on Traditional Herbal medicinal practices in Udalguri and Karbi Anglong, Assam

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Introduction:

- **Traditional Medicine:** The W.H.O has defined traditional medicine (including herbal drugs) as comprising therapeutic practices that have been in existence, often for hundreds of years, before the development and spread of modern medicine and are still in use today. Traditional medicine is the synthesis of therapeutic experience of generations of practicing physicians of indigenous system of medicine. Traditional preparations comprise medicinal plants, minerals and organic matter, etc.
- **Traditional Herbal Medicinal Practices:** The term traditional herbal medicinal practices here refer to the use of knowledge and practices of medicinal plants to treat various illnesses using traditional methods. Traditional herbal medicinal practices is the oldest form of health care in the world which is the process of using herbs or plants for prevention, and treatment of physical and mental illnesses. Different societies historically developed various useful healing practices to combat a variety of health and life-threatening illnesses. Traditional herbal medicinal practice is also variously known as complementary and alternative, or ethnic medicine, and it still plays a key role in many countries today (Yuan et al. 2016).
- Documentation involves collecting, classifying, recording, preserving, and communicating the information which is an indispensable aspect of libraries.

Documentation of Traditional Herbal Medicinal Practices:

- Documentation of knowledge helps in knowledge creation and problem-solving. Knowledge of traditional herbal medicinal practices is fall under the tacit form of knowledge which is mainly practicing by the traditional herbal medicinal practitioners of the different communities and passing orally from generation to generation. Many Cultures have very strong heritage of herbal remedies but lack written records and most commonly used route of administration has been oral-based. As a result, the knowledge of traditional medicine and the medicinal practices is disappearing fast, and at this rate, indications are there that the knowledge could extinct with the passage of time. If not documented properly this valuable knowledge may disappear due to various reasons. Libraries can play an important role in this regard.

- In this regard this study was carried out to investigate in regards of documentation of the medicinal plants used by two communities in selected villages of Udalguri Development Block & Langsomepi development block of Karbi Anglong district, of Assam to treat different illnesses traditionally and to investigate the attitude of traditional herbal medicinal practitioners towards the documentation of traditional herbal medicinal practices .
- Finally, it is also attempted to survey the any District Public library of selected districts in regards of check the status of implementation of such strategies and various measures in place for the documentation of traditional herbal medicinal practices in libraries.

Objectives:

The study's main objectives are:

1. to document the medicinal plants used by various communities in selected villages of two districts to treat different illnesses traditionally
2. to plan the various measures in place for the documentation of traditional herbal medicinal practices in libraries.

Methodology:

- Authors used survey methods for which a preliminary survey was carried out for two communities, i.e., Bodo & Karbi in 4 different villages in the Udalguri Development Block of the Udalguri district of the Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR) of Assam and 4 different villages.
- For this purpose a pre-tested structured interview schedule was carried out in different villages of Udalguri Development Block Langsomepi development block. Data were collected through one-on-one interactive communication process by personally meeting and interacting with the traditional herbal medicinal practitioners and field observation. Data were collected on traditional herbal medicinal practices by the two communities that inhabited this area.
- Two district Public libraries were surveyed to find out if any effort towards documentation of traditional herbal medicinal practices.
- Data gathered in the preliminary survey were analysed using tables with the interpretation of data used by various communities.

Finding and Analysis(Objective 1)

- Table 1: Traditional herbal medicinal practices of Bodo and Karbi communities in Udalguri and Langsomepi Development Block, Assam:**

Sl.No.	Uses	Plants name (Local)	Plants Name(Scientific)	Parts used /Mode of Preparation and uses	Tribes/Indigenous communities
1	Head ache	Era-gach/Indi	<i>Ricinus communis</i> L.	Part use :Fresh leaf. Method of preparation :Leaf boiled and juice extract from the boiled leaf and given to drink	Bodo
2	Headache	a)Thalirathia/Athiyakol and b) Jomlakhuti/Burhitokon/BelaUri	a) <i>Musa balbisiana</i> and b) <i>Hellenia speciosa</i> (J.Koeing) S.R.Dutta	Part use: The core of the plant body Method of preparation: A little amount of central core from both stem and <i>Costusspeciosus</i> are grind and paste on the human head externally.	Bodo

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Sl.No.	Uses	Plants name (Local)	Plants Name(Scientific)	Parts used /Mode of Preparation and uses	Tribes/Indigenous communities
3	Pain during irregular period	Era-Gach/Indi	<i>Ricinus communis</i> L.	Part use:Leaf Method of preparation:Leaf boiled and juice extract from the boiled leaf and given to drink	Bodo
4	Body pain	Piyaj, Sambram	<i>Allium cepa</i> L.	Part use: Bulb Method of preparation: Pieces of bulb mixed with one spoon of mustard oil and roasted. And applied on infected area externally.	Bodo

Finding and Analysis(Objective 1)

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Sl.No.	Uses	Plants name (Local)	Plants Name(Scientific)	Parts used /Mode of Preparation and uses	Tribes/Indigenous communities
5	Body Pain	Gogol bon	<i>Typha domingensis</i> Pers.	<p>Party use: Flower and Shoot.</p> <p>Method of preparation: Flowers dried, burning them taken heat on foot. Young shoots are given to eat</p>	Bodo
6	Body/muscles Pain/ sudden stomach pain	Khanari	<i>Crinum pratens</i>	<p>Part use:Leaf, Tuber.</p> <p>Method of preparation:On the upper side of the fresh leaves polished with mustard oil and hit in a pan and massaged the muscles.2/3 times a day.</p> <p>Also, in sudden stomach pain 1 cup of decoctions of the tuber is given to drink.</p>	Bodo

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Sl.No.	Uses	Plants name (Local)	Plants Name(Scientific)	Parts used /Mode of Preparation and uses	Tribes/Indigenous communities
7	Fever, hiccough	Chong amok (Karbi)	<i>Centella Asiatica</i> (Linn.)	Part use: Whole plant. Method of preparation: Leaves are crushed together with other plants i.e. (bark), Oxalis corniculata (leaf), Mode of Application: Fresh leave paste is given orally twice	Karbi
8	Malaria fever, whooping cough	Jok-an	<i>Phlogocanthus thyrsiflorus</i> Nees.	Part use: Leaves, flowers Method of preparation: Its flowers can be cooked and eaten as vegetables. Leaves and flower extracts is orally taken. Mode of application	Karbi

Sl.No.	Uses	Plants name (Local)	Plants Name(Scientific)	Parts used /Mode of Preparation and uses	Tribes/Indigenous communities
9	Use as painkiller	Haan moisa	<i>Vernonia volkemaefalia</i> DC.vern.	<p>Part use: Leaves</p> <p>Method of preparation: Leaves are crushed and extract juice.</p> <p>Mode of application with probable dosage: 20-30 ml Juice is taken orally,</p> <p>Duration: 3days</p>	Karbi
10	Ailments treated: Jaundice	Dido sudo	<i>Amaranthus spinosus L.</i>	<p>Part use: Roots</p> <p>Naming of plants based on habits:</p> <p>Plant use in the form of: Fresh.</p> <p>Method of preparation: Roots of Amarantha are crushed together with Mango (bark) extract juice.</p> <p>Mode of application with probable dosage: 50 ml of juice is given orally</p> <p>Duration: One week or until cured</p>	Karbi

Sl.No.	Uses	Plants name (Local)	Plants Name(Scientific)	Parts used /Mode of Preparation and uses	Tribes/Indigenous communities
11	Toothache and it is also act as local anesthesia	Bapchuki	<i>Spilanthes acmella</i> Murr	Part use: Leaves, flowers and barks Method of preparation: Leaves, flowers and barks is crushed into paste Mode of application with probable dosage: Ailments treated: Duration: 3 days or until cured.	Karbi
12	Ailments treated: Jaundice	Nopak ban	<i>Oroxylum indicum</i> (Linn.) Benth. Ex Kurz.	Cultivation status: Wild variety Part use: Barks Naming of plants based on habits: Tree Method of preparation: Fresh roots are crushed and extract juice Mode of application with probable dosage: 50 ml of juice is taken orally before food. Duration: One week or until cured	Karbi

Some of the photographs with Traditional herbal medicinal practitioners



Some of the photographs with Traditional herbal medicinal practitioners



Some of the medicine from various plants prepared by Traditional herbal medicinal practitioners



Some of the medicinal plants used by Traditional herbal medicinal practitioners



Finding and Analysis (Objective 1)

- During the data collection process, the name of the plants, uses, methods of preparation, mode of application, probable dosage, and duration of treatment were compiled and documented. A survey was carried out on eight villages for one month in which 27 different medicinal plants were compiled and recorded involving 8 practitioners belonging to the Bodo, and Karbi communities.
- It is found that different plants are used by traditional herbal practitioners in treating the same purpose. From the **Table 1** it is found that the cross-cultural uses of plants by traditional herbal medicinal practitioners of different communities.
- It is found that 13 different types of pain (Headache, pain during irregular menstruation periods, body pain, Pain due to insect bites, Earache, stomach pain and toothache) are treated by the traditional herbal practitioners by using 12 different types of plants.

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Finding and Analysis (Objective 1)

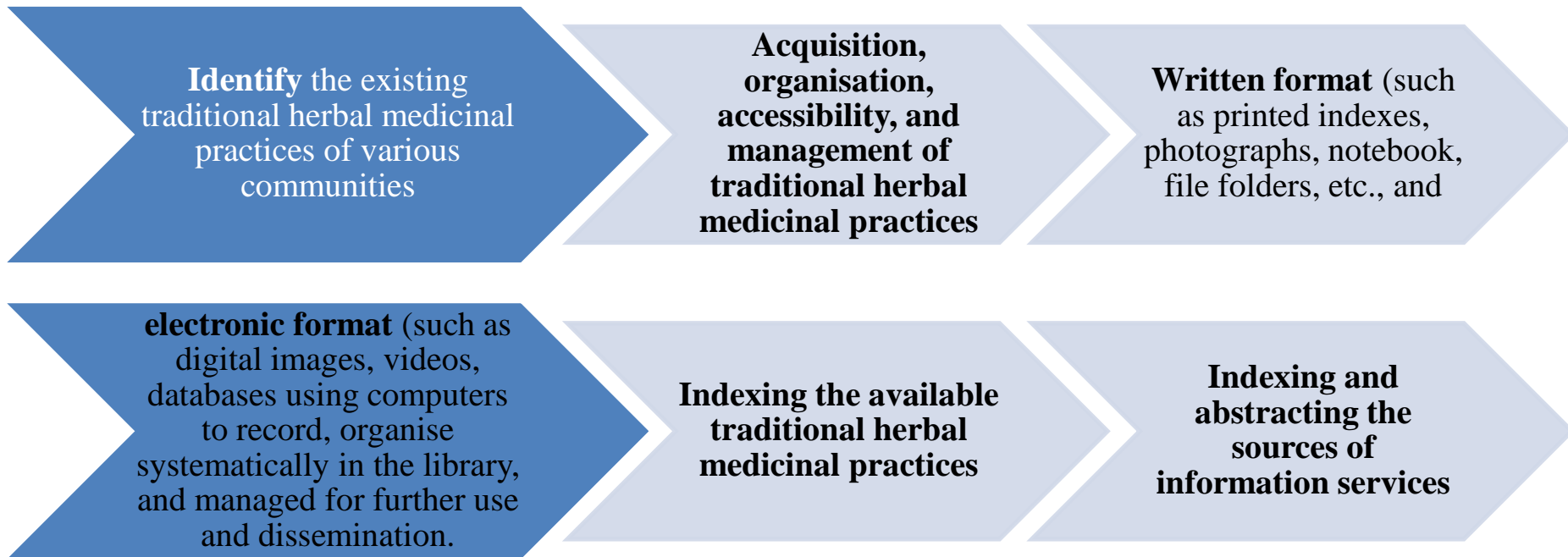
- It is found that 6 different types of plants are used in the treatment of Influenza, cold and cough, fever, asthma, Whooping cough, bronchitis and malaria by traditional herbal practitioners.
- To treat Jaundice 4 plants are used by traditional herbal practitioners of Bodo and Karbi communities.
- To treat bone fracture 2 plants are used by traditional herbal practitioners in Bodo and Karbi communities.

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Finding and Analysis(Objective 2)

- It is also observed that libraries of selected areas were not adopting any planning for documenting the traditional herbal medicinal practices and which is also very essential for protecting such type of rich traditional herbal knowledge by libraries with a proper strategy for collection, organisation, preservation and communication. Through the efforts of the library professionals it will help preserve cultural heritage and facilitate the integration of traditional knowledge into broader educational, scientific and policy frameworks.
- Herbal medicinal practitioners of various communities were interacted to investigate the attitude of traditional towards the documentation of traditional herbal medicinal practices and it is found that only one herbal medicinal practitioner of the Bodo community is used to write in diary towards documentation about the details of their traditional herbal medicinal practices. Other interviewed practitioners are not following any documentation strategies and want to disseminate their knowledge through family oral tradition.

Strategies and recommendations for libraries: A Plane for documentation of Traditional herbal medicinal practices in libraries:



Conclusions

In conclusion, the preservation and responsible utilization of traditional herbal medicinal practices are imperative to uphold cultural heritage and advance public health initiatives. Establishing a robust collection development policy and documentation framework within libraries is paramount to achieve this goal.

Through strategic implementation of knowledge management strategies, libraries can serve as pivotal institutions in safeguarding this invaluable knowledge. By conducting field surveys, gathering comprehensive data, and employing modern documentation techniques such as photography and videography with community consent, libraries can compile a rich repository of traditional herbal medicinal practices. This digital or offline archive, maintained with stringent access policies, not only ensures the perpetuation of traditional knowledge but also facilitates its dissemination to benefit both communities and practitioners.

Also, we can improve the strategies towards documentation of traditional herbal medicinal practices by adopting AI technologies such as, in image recognition to identify medicinal plants from photos by analyzing the plant image and extract features for accurate identification and also Natural Language Processing (NLP) and machine translation for translating and interpreting cross-cultural understanding and preservation.

THANK YOU