



**A SHORT COMMUNICATION ON THE ETHNOMEDICINAL STUDY OF PLANTS  
BELONGING TO FAMILY FABACEAE**

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**ABSTRACT**

In the present swot up various plant species have been reported by for treatment of diverse ailments and disease. The present work deals with certain plants of the family Fabaceae being ethnomedicinally exploited for the cure of various diseases. For instance, *Cassia fistula* is used for stomach pain and spleen disorder, *Crotolaria juncea* is used for paralysis and *Trigonella foenum-graecum* is used for diabetes and paralysis, *Acacia farnesiana* is used for joint pain. Thus, the work is proven to mark out the exact phytochemical(s) which could be implicated for curing diverse ailments and diseases belonging to family Fabaceae. This work will help in the discovery of potential therapeutic molecule(s) for curing diseases.

**KEYWORDS:** Fabaceae, Ethnomedicine, Traditional knowledge, Ethnomedicinal tools, Chhattisgarh.

**INTRODUCTION**

The Fabaceae is one of the large and economically valuable families of plant species. It comprises of trees, shrubs and herbs, either perennial or annual. These plant species have easy recognisable characters, such as their fruits (legume), compound and stipulated leaves. This group is widely distributed and is the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest plant family with respect to number of species, followed by Orchidaceae and Asteraceae, with around 730 genera and over 19,400 species.<sup>[1-5]</sup> It is one of the most common

families which are found in tropical rainforests and in dry forests.<sup>[6-9]</sup> Traditional knowledge of medicinal plants and their use by indigenous population needs to be conserved for their cultural tradition along with the biodiversity.

The present paper is thus an attempt to document the medicinal knowledge of plant species belonging to family Fabaceae for curing various diseases.

**Table 1: Documentation of medicinal knowledge (TK) on the health care usages against various diseases.**<sup>[10-31]</sup>

| S. No. | Botanical name                   | Common Name  | Diseases                 | Plant part used |
|--------|----------------------------------|--------------|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1      | <i>Abrus precatorius</i> L.      | Gunj         | Skin disease, Joint pain | Root            |
| 2      | <i>Cassia fistula</i> Linn       | Amaltas      | Spleen disorder          | Bark            |
| 3      | <i>Clitoria ternatea</i>         | Aparajita    | Fever, Jaundice          | Fruit, Stem     |
| 4      | <i>Acacia arabica</i>            | Babool       | Blood pressure           | Seed            |
| 5      | <i>Acacia auriculoformis</i>     | Arakasiya    | Skin disease             | Leaves          |
| 6      | <i>Erythrina suberosa</i>        | Balodiya     | External cancer          | Bark            |
| 7      | <i>Cicer arietinum</i>           | Black gram   | Joint pain               | Seeds           |
| 8      | <i>Butea monosperma</i>          | Safed palash | Weakness                 | Seeds           |
| 9      | <i>Acacia farnesiana</i>         | Kadam kapoor | Joint pain               | Bark            |
| 10     | <i>Pongamia pinnata</i>          | Karanj       | Skin disorder            | Leaves          |
| 11     | <i>Mucuna pruriens</i>           | Kawaach kini | Joint pain               | Fruit           |
| 12     | <i>Dolichos biflorus</i>         | Kulthiya     | Joint pain               | Root            |
| 13     | <i>Trigonella foenum-graecum</i> | Methi        | Diabetes                 | Fruit           |
| 14     | <i>Crotolaria juncea</i>         | Sun beej     | Joint pain               | Seeds           |
| 15     | <i>Glycin max</i>                | Soyabean     | Joint pain               | Seeds           |
| 16     | <i>Arachis hypogaea</i>          | Groundnut    | Bone fracture            | Seeds           |
| 17     | <i>Puereria tuberosa</i>         | Patal Kohda  | Typhoid                  | Tuber           |
| 18     | <i>Flemingia strobilifera</i>    | Sabarbhaj    | Chest pain and Strength  | Root            |

## DISCUSSION

Traditional Medicine is a vital source of health care, apart from being a source of income for many communities. The medicinal plants used today have been discovered by pre – industrial communities. At present many communities have involved themselves in the collection, domestication, cultivation and management of medicinal plant resources. The traditional healers use these medicinal plant species which are collected from the adjoining and far away forested areas for the control and cure of diseases.

The villagers prefer traditional healers for diagnosis of health problem and use the medicine prescribed for curing the ailments. Since last few decades there has been tremendous reduction in the usage of ethnomedicinal plants owing to increase modern facilities but people still prefer herbal formulations for alleviating their ailments.

Large number of human population living in villages is dependent upon plant resources for health care requirements. This is due to high cost prices of allopathic medicines and the adverse effects associated when compared to the herbal medicines. It was also observed that traditional medicinal values are facing challenges owing to the disinterest of youth in learning the traditional knowledge and migration to cities, resulting in decreased transmission of knowledge.

Therefore it is utmost important to document the traditional knowledge as it is confined to these healers. This will help in carrying out further research work and to future generations as well. Moreover, native medicinal plants are also under threat due to global warming, anthropogenic and developmental activities.

## CONCLUSION

The work is promising and currently under progress which might help in the discovery of potential therapeutic molecule(s) for the control and cure of various diseases. The high consent obtained for the traditional healers underlines their well defined herbal culture and tradition. This may guide for the selection of medicinal plants as potential candidate for curing various diseases. The herbal claim needs to be exploited further in order to develop new cost effective drug.

The study depicted that local people prefer traditional medicine due to their socioeconomic status, lack of modern healthcare facilities and inadequate transportation. Resource persons were invariably elderly people of the village. The younger generation being reluctant to take up the practice of herbal healing implies for the documentation of traditional knowledge. It is the only way out to preserve the knowledge base which in turn will conserve the plant resources endemic to the area.

The prominent reason for the shortcoming is lack of knowledge about the native plants in relation to their identification, conservation, propagation, threat associated and ethnobotanical uses. The outcome of the present study would be helpful in better understanding the potential of native plants and will also contribute in narrowing the gap in the literature.

This comprehensive information will be helpful in great extent to the students, local people, traditional healers, researchers, academicians, conservation professionals etc.

## Future prospects

Based on the present study, following recommendations can be made for future study:

1. Incorporation of ethnobotanical knowledge and traditional health care system in school curriculum.
2. Encouragement of research and development for evaluation and standardization of traditional phytomedicines.
3. Establishment of suitable framework and approach for IPR.
4. Increasing awareness for documentation of ethnobotanical knowledge.

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

There is no conflict of interest in this article.

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