

**MEDICINAL PLANTS USED FOR WOMEN'S HEALTHCARE IN KURKHEDA DIST.  
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**ABSTRACT**

There is persistent use of traditional medicine for women's health care in Kurkheda district Gadchiroli, they generally depend on traditional medicinal plants as the source for the treatment of their reproductive health issues. This study aims to document and collect information on herbal remedies used by traditional healers for women's healthcare in Kurkheda surrounded rural areas. Data about traditional uses of medicinal plants for female healthcare were collected through qualitative tools (questionnaire, interviews, and group discussions). A total of 15 medicinal plant species from 07 different families have been documented as being used for female healthcare. Different methods of preparation of the medicinal remedy were prescribed usually as maceration or decoction of one plant or as a mixture of two or more plant species with an average dose of two glasses per day. Literatures confirm the use of most of these plants in the treatment of women's gynecological problems. This study indicates that a wide range of remedies are used by women for the treatment of several complications and problems associated with women's health issues.

**KEYWORDS:** Medicinal plants, Traditional healers, women healthcare, Phytochemistry, herbal remedies.**INTRODUCTION**

The knowledge of medicinal plants has been accumulated in the course of many centuries based on different Indian system of medicines such as Ayurveda, Unani and Siddha. Today there is an increasing desire to unravel the role of ethnobotanical studies in trapping the centuries old traditional folk knowledge as well as in searching new plant resources of food, drug etc. (Jain, 1991). Medicinal plants have been used to treat diseases for thousands of years. Traditional herbal remedies have increased in popularity in many parts of the world due to their effectiveness, fewer side effects, and are relatively low in cost.<sup>[1]</sup> According to the World Health Organization (WHO), a majority of the world's population in developing countries depend on traditional medicine for their psychological and physical healthcare requirements.<sup>[2]</sup> A substantial number of Kurkheda, women seek treatment from traditional healers for the problems associated with their reproductive system, such as fertility, menstruation, menstrual colic, menopause problems, pregnancy, labor, postpartum problems etc. Maharashtra's flora is considered to be one of the richest biodiversity areas among the India. The state possesses a great number of endemic species and a wide range of flora. 25 genera and 64 species are endemic to India and occur in Maharashtra. It has been estimated that there is a

total of 1,081 genera, 3,025 species, representing 187 families.<sup>[3]</sup>

There have been very few studies conducted about the use of medicinal plants in kurkheda Hence, this study aims to document the medicinal plants used in kurkheda by traditional medical practitioners related to women's healthcare. For this purpose, local or common names of the medicinal plants, their main used parts, their method of preparation and administration and finally the ethnopharmacological practices were recorded. This study has provided important baseline information that would improve the knowledge and the application of the reported medicinal plants as safe therapeutic alternatives.

**MATERIAL AND METHODS**

**Study area:** kurkheda is tehsil in the Gadchiroli district in the Indian state of Maharashtra Situated in the (20.37° N 80.12°E). In kurkheda Tahsil, local Vaidus are natural retainers of traditional knowledge which passed from generation to generation through oral folklore.

**Data Collection:** This survey was conducted between January and March, 2022 from 23 interviewees (9 midwives and 14 practitioners). Prior to completing the study, all the interviewees signed a consent form and

were approved to participate in this study. The informants were between the age of 40 and 70 years old. Details of the plants that were used for dealing with reproductive problems of women were collected from the practitioners. The information was collected through a questionnaire, interviews and group discussions that were all conducted in practitioners' local language (Gondi, Marathi & Hindi). The collected data from the informants included the names of the used plants, their traditional use, parts, method of preparation for the remedy, dosage and the duration of treatment. Samples of the surveyed species were collected for herbarium preparation following standard procedure and given an herbarium specimen number. The identification of specimens was undertaken using the relevant volumes of the Flora of Maharashtra which then was confirmed by plant taxonomic experts.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

During present survey fifteen medicinal plant species belonging to seven families were recorded. A brief information including botanical name, family, local name, parts used and their medicinal value by the peoples is given in Table No.1. As the surrounded forest area to kurkheda, most of the local healers collected the plants from the forest. The medicinal plant parts like leaf, bark, seed, root, tuber, fruit and whole plant were used in raw or cooked forms (Enumeration). Although this is firsthand knowledge about ethnomedicine in Kurkheda tahsil, thorough pharmacological investigations are

recommended since the informants claim the uses with confidence and strong belief. The main aim of this study was to gather the information about the different medicinal plants used to cure reproductive problem of women's in Kurkheda. Most of the local people still dependent and believed on the herbal plants for their remedial properties. There is no written document of such indigenous plant medicine. It spread only by mouth publicity. It is the alarming sign that the knowledge of medicinal plants will disappear in near future. So it is important to preserve this precious knowledge for future generations. These ethnomedicinal plants present in the vicinity of the forest are also a source of income for the local communities. The ethnomedicinal plants are under threat due to deforestation, overgrazing and their over utilization. Due to this many medicinal plants are now come under critically endangered category. There is urgent need of their conservation (Burlakoti and Kunwar, 2008). By taking the active support of local and villagers, and forest persons these plants can be preserved for our future generations. Altogether 30 plant species representing to 14 Different parts of the medicinal plant species were used (whole plant, leaves, stem, fruits, seeds, bark and root); but leaves were the most commonly used part. The most common method of administration was either as infusions or decoctions taken orally or applied topically. Many species were used to deal with more than one reproductive ailment, for instance the majority of species were used for postpartum recovery.

Family	Scientific Name	Local Name	Parts Used	Methods of Use	Recommended Uses	Administration, dosages, Duration of the treatment
Liliaceae	<i>Allium Cepa</i> L.	Kanda	Bulbs	Oral	Controls diabetes during pregnancy constipation boosting immunity Menstrual colic.	Fresh with meals for menstrual colic eating raw onions 4 to 5 days before the period
	<i>Allium sativum</i> L.	Lasun	Bulbs	Oral	Controls diabetes during pregnancy vaginal infections prevents hair loss treating high blood pressure.	2 to 4 fresh garlic cloves daily
	<i>Chlorohytum borivilianum</i> Roxb.	Safed moosli	tuberous root	Oral	to check leucorrhoea.	1-gram powder of tuberous root is mixed with water
	<i>Aloe vera</i> (L) Burm	Korphad	Leaves	Oral	.	Pulp juice of leaf is used to cure piles, jaundice and stomach ache. and apply locally to recover the burnt skin and for wound healing
	<i>Gloriosa superba</i> L.	Kal-lavi	Tuber	Oral	to regularize menstrual disorder	About 10 mg tuber powder is taken orally by the tribal ladies only once to regularize menstrual disorder. Tribals crush tubers of the plant in water and apply on head to kill the lice.
Orchidaceae	<i>Vanda tessellata</i> (Roxb.) Hook.	Rashna	leaves	oral	To control irregular menstruation	Leaf is given orally with betel leaf to women having irregular menstruation
	<i>Geodorum</i>	Harghati	roots	Oral	to regularized	Fresh root paste mixed with 2

	<i>densiflorum</i> L.				menstrual problems.	drops of ghee and 5 ml of honey and taken orally to regularized menstrual problems.
Fabaceae	<i>Tephrosia purpurea</i> Linn.	Diwali	roots	oral		Decoction of root against diarrhea, rheumatism, asthma and urinary disorder.
	<i>Pueraria tuberosa</i> Roxb.	Bhuikohla	Tubers	oral	To prescribe for lactation after childbirth	Tubers are crushed and applied o joints to treat rheumatism. Tuber decoction is prescribed for lactation after childbirth. In painful urination.
	<i>Butea monosperma</i> Lamk	Palash	seed	oral	Use as contraceptive	Seed powder with goat milk is given as an aphrodisiac. Seed powder is taken orally as contraceptive. Shoot paste is applied twice a day for one week piles
	<i>Psoralea corylifolia</i> L.	Bawchi	Seed			Seed powder one spoonful with a glass of milk is prescribed twice a day for a month in the treatment of impotency, premature ejaculation and to improve vitality. Seed oil of applied externally in psoriasis, leprosy and leucoderma.
Scrophulariaceae	<i>Sopubia delphinifolia</i> G. Don Gen. Syst	Dudhali	stem	oral	To enhance milk secretion during pregnancy	The stem is given orally after pregnancy for milk secretion
Moraceae	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i> L	wad	latex	oral	To control Vaginal complains	The milk extract of plant with 1 teas full sugar is used against ulcers, vomiting, vaginal complaints, fever, inflammations, leprosy etc.
Asteraceae	<i>Echinops echinatus</i> Roxb.	ulati	Root bark			Paste prepared from powder of the root bark is applied on male genitals externally for sexual vigour. Root decoction is an effective remedy for hernia
Malvaceae	<i>Abutilon indicum</i> L.	Atibala	Whole plant Flower, leaves		To treat bladder infection, for safe and quick pregnancy	Various parts of the plant are used as a demulcent, aphrodisiac, laxative, diuretic, sedative, astringent, expectorant, tonic, anti-inflammatory, anthelmintic, and analgesic and to treat leprosy, ulcers, headaches, gonorrhea, and bladder infection. The whole plant is uprooted, dried and is powdered. To consume a spoonful of this powder with a spoonful of honey, once in a day, for 6 months until the day of marriage, for safe and quick pregnancy. The leaves are used as adjunct to medicines used for pile complaints. The flowers are used to increase semen in men

**CONCLUSION**

This study investigated the medicinal plants related to women's healthcare in Kurkheda district Gadchiroli, the

persistent use of traditional medicine by women is indicative of the importance of ethnobotanical research for maintaining traditional resources and in particular to

focus on used species for women's health care. The study showed that a wide range of remedies are used by women for many problems and disorders associated with women's health issues including fertility, inducing labor, as galactagogues, treatment of menstrual problems, and antimicrobial infections. Literature was surveyed for the gynecological claimed use of the reported traditional medicinal plants.

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