

Herbal haircare as revealed by people in Jalgaon district, Maharashtra, India

Pawar Shubhangi¹ and D. A. Patil²

¹Department of Botany, Pratap College, Amalner 425401 District Jalgaon, Maharashtra, India

²Post-Graduate Department of Botany, L. K. Dr. P. R. Ghogrey, Science College, Dhule-424005, Maharashtra, India.

Abstract

The paper deals with herbal hair cosmetics used in tribal and rural areas of Jalgaon district (Maharashtra, India). The indigenous uses of 23 plant species belonging to 23 genera of 18 angiospermic families are presented. Each application is presented with its botanical name, vernacular name and family, their uses, methods of preparation of cosmetic product and mode of applications. Interestingly, 21 species out of 23 form additional reports for India. Scientific assessments of these applications are however desirable.

Keywords: Hair care, Jalgaon District, Ethnobotany

INTRODUCTION

Jalgaon district is one of the district of north part of Maharashtra. Agriculture is the mainstay of the people. However, some tribal communities such as Pawara, Tadvi, Vanjara, Bhil, etc. depend partially on the surrounding vegetation for their daily various needs of their life. They have their own traditions of customs, rites, rituals, festivals, etc. Use of plants as herbal cosmetics is part and parcel of their traditional culture and play a considerable role in their health, skin and hair care practices. The observations extended in the area are being communicated in this paper, particularly herbal hair care practices followed by the tribal and rural people.

METHODOLOGY

The present authors surveyed Jalgaon district ethnobotanically in the last decade's time. The tribal people viz., Pawara, Tadvi, Bhil, Vanjara, etc. were interviewed in different parts of the district. The plant uses were noted in view of cosmetics as employed by them (Table 1). The part/product used, local name of a plant, and mode of their applications have been noted with due care. The data adduced have been compared with the classical literature (cf. Ambasta, 1986; Anonymous, 1948-1976; Jain, 1991; Watt, 1889-1893, etc.) to point out additional uses for India. The plan determination was completed consulting various floras (cf. Naik, 1998, Kshirsagar and Patil, 2008; Patil, 2003; Sharma *et al.*, 1996; Singh *et al.*, 2000, 2001; Cooke, 1958, etc.). The herbarium specimens have been housed in the Department of Botany, Pratap College, Amalner (M.S.), India.

DISCUSSION

The use of plants as noted haircare practices of tribal and

rural people in Jalgaon district are presented in this paper. As many as 23 plant species belonging 23 genera of 18 angiospermic families have been recorded useful for the said purpose. Comparative studies indicated that 21 species (unasterisked) out of 23 form new or additional reports for India. These practices are part of their traditional life and inherited since ancient times. The women candidates are particularly well knowledgeable about their applications. Some of the plant species are also grown in kitchen gardens or readily available in their surroundings. The various plant parts such as roots, stem, leaves, flowers, fruits and seeds are employed to prepare the recipes applied. Washing of hair, killing of lice, hair fall, removal of dandruff, hair conditioner and blackening of hair are common purposes observed in the area. Aloe vera pulp and coconut oil generally find place in their preparation as additives or base. The recipes noted are juice, oil, paste, powder, extract, etc. The method of preparation and period of application vary with the kind of purpose. The documentation of traditional knowledge is a remarkable step keeping in view the changing and disappearing of traditions of beauty care. However, attempts are needed to validate these ancient herbal claims on modern scientific lines.

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*Corresponding Author

Pawar Shubhangi
Department of Botany, Pratap College, Amalner 425401 District Jalgaon,
Maharashtra, India

Email: shubhangipawarb@rediffmail.com

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Table 1. Plant Species Used In Haircare

Sr. No.	Plant Name & Family	Local Name	Part Used	Purpose	Administration
1.	<i>Abrus precatorius</i> L. Papilionaceae	Gunj, Charmtadi	Seed	To promote hair growth on bald.	Paste of Abrus seed and flowers of <i>Hibiscus rosasinensis</i> L. in equal amount are homogenized and applied on scalp at night regularly.
2.	<i>Ailanthus excelsa</i> Roxb. Simaroubaceae	Maharukha	Leaf	To kill lice	Leaf paste applied on scalp.
3.	<i>Aloe vera</i> L. Liliaceae	Korphad	Leaf	For washing hair.	Leaf juice is used to wash hair.
4.	<i>Annona squamosa</i> L. Ranunculaceae	Seetaphal	Seed	To prevent hair fall.	Seeds are crushed in urine of cow and applied on scalp.
				To kill lice.	Seed powder is applied on scalp regularly.
5.	<i>Bridelia airy-shawii</i> P.T.Li. Euphorbiaceae	Asan	Seed	Hair growth and to dye hair	Seed oil is applied on scalp regularly.
6.	<i>Careya arborea</i> Roxb. Barringtoniaceae	Kumbha	Fruit	Hair Growth	Fruit pulp is applied to scalp at night for a week.
7.	<i>Calatropis gigantea</i> (L.) R.Br. Asclepiadaceae	Safed Rui	Latex	Prevent hair fall	Latex mixed in fruit powder of <i>Emblca officinalis</i> Gaertn. applied on scalp regularly.
8.	* <i>Centella asiatica</i> (L.) Urb. Apiaceae	Brahmi	Leaf paste	Hair growth	Leaf paste is applied on scalp regularly.
9.	<i>Citrus aruntifolia</i> (Chistn) J.W. Rutaceae	Limbu	Fruit	To remove dandruff.	Fruit juice is applied on head at night for 4 to 5 days.
10.	<i>Cyperus rotundus</i> Linn. subsp. rotundus Cyperaceae	Lavali	Rhizome	For washing hair & hair growth.	Rhizome powder is used to wash hair.
11.	<i>Clitoria tematea</i> L. Papilionaceae	Gokam	Root	As a hair dye.	Powder of root mixed in sugarcane juice. (<i>Saccharum officinarum</i> L.) and kept in vessel for one month. The paste is applied to hair and scalp.
12.	<i>Cuscuta chinensis</i> Lam. Cuscutaceae	Amarvel	Stem paste	To remove dandruff	Stem paste is applied on scalp at night regularly.
13.	* <i>Eclipta prostrat</i> (L.) L. Asteraceae	Kala-maka	Leaf	Hair growth	Leaf extract is added in coconut oil (<i>Cocos nucifera</i> L.) and used as a hair oil.
14.	<i>Emblca officinalis</i> Gaertn. Euphorbiaceae	Awala	Fruit	To remove dandruff and for hair growth on bald and to prevent hair fall.	About 500 gm of leaves of <i>Centella asiatica</i> (L.) Urb. is mixed in 250 gm fruit powder of <i>Emblca officinalis</i> Gaertn. It is boiled in one litre of coconut oil. This oil is applied on scalp.
15.	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i> L. Moraceae	Wad, Wat	Aerial root	Hair growth	Paste of aerial roots is applied on scalp at night regularly.
16.	<i>Hibiscus rosa sinensis</i> L. Malvaceae	Jaswand	Flower	Hair growth	Flower extract is added in coconut oil (<i>Cocos nucifera</i> L.) and used as hair oil.
17.	<i>Jatropha curcas</i> L. Euphorbiaceae	Arand, Magali - erand	Seed	For washing hair	Seeds are crushed and applied to wash hair.
18.	* <i>Hemidesmus indicus</i> L. Periplocaceae	Anantmul	Root	Hair growth	Paste of root is applied on scalp at night.
19.	<i>Lawsonia inermis</i> L. Lythraceae	Mehandi	Leaf	As a hair conditioner and also used as a hair dye.	Paste of leaves is applied over scalp to dye hair and as a conditioner to hair.
20.	<i>Medico sativa</i> L. Papilionaceae	Lasoon ghas	Seed	Hair growth	Paste of seed is applied on scalp at night about a week.
21.	<i>Murraya koenigii</i> (L.) Spreng Rutaceae	Kadhipatta	Leaf	To turn hair black	Leaf extract is mixed in coconut oil and used as hair oil.

Sr. No.	Plant Name & Family	Local Name	Part Used	Purpose	Administration
22.	<i>Sapindus laurifolius</i> Vahl Sapindaceae	Rita	Fruit	For washing hair	Decoction of fruit is used to wash hair.
23.	<i>Trigonella foenum-gracum</i> L. Papilionaceae	Methi	Seed	Hair growth	Seeds are kept in the leaf pulp of <i>Aloe vera</i> (L.) Burn over night. These seeds are used to wash hair and improve hair growth.