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Studies on plants used by Gond people of Etapalli tahsil from Gadchiroli district for cultural, worship and craft purposes

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ABSTRACT

Indian population is conglomeration of large number of different tribes. Most of these people living in vicinity of the forest. According to 2011 census India is second largest tribal population of world. In India Tribal population is 8.9%. Most of Tribal include tribe like Bhill, Kokana, Gavit, Dubla, Korku Dhanka and Mauchi. In India Lakshadweep, Mizoram, Manipur, Nagaland, Arunachal pradesh more than 60% population is tribal. Etapalli is a small city and Tahsil in Gadchiroli District of Maharashtra. According to census 2011 total area of Etapalli Tahsil is 2,267 km^2. Etapalli Tahsil has a population of 81,713and population density of 36.04 people per sq. km. When it comes to literacy, 53% population of Etapalli Tahsil is literate, out of which 60.23% males and 47.21% females are literate. There are about 180 plus villages in Etapalli Tahsil. In Gadchiroli district, Gond, Mana, Pradhan, Madia tribe predominantly observed from Aheri, Etapalli, Bhamragad, Sironcha and Dhanora tahsil. Most of the tribal people utilized available plants from surrounding for purposes of food, fodder, and medicine, spiritual and for handicraft purposes. Most of population from this area is depending on forest and engaging them self in collection and utilization of timber and non-timber forest products and resources. In present study 31 different plants used by Tribal's of Etapalli Tahsil for the purposes of food, fodder, medicine, handicraft, fish poison, beverages, spiritual and for other purposes were discuses in this paper. Along with the information photographs of these plants and their products were included.

Keywords: - Etapalli, Gadchiroli District, Tribal, Cultural and worship, Gond tribe

INTRODUCTION

Plants play a significant role in the life and culture of Tribal people. Religious and ceremonial plants refer to a group of sacred plant species that are used in various rituals by Tribal people of Gadchiroli district.

Gadchiroli district is situated on the North-East side of the Maharashtra State in India & is well known for dense forest; having State borders of Telangana and Chhattisgarh. The district is covered with hills and forests and is considered as a tribal area of Maharashtra. The forests are Predominantly in Etapalli, Aheri, Dhanora, Korchi, Kurkheda, Sironcha and Bhamraged blocks. The district has forests cover near about 76% of the geographical area of the district. District is famous for Bamboo and Tendu leaves.

Population of Gadchiroli district comprises various Tribal communities who are living in scattered and small patches of forested belts and away from mainstream population. Their social, cultural, and economic patterns differ from region to region. These aborigine people maintain a close relationship between the community and their surroundings, hence found to have great knowledge on the use of plants for various spiritual, cultural and various other purposes.

Tribal's have developed their own traditional knowledge related to plant Medicine, Cultural, Worship, Musical instruments, Dancing, Singing, Fishery and Oil extraction, etc. The information pertain mainly to Gond, Madia Tribes particularly their primitive group from Gadchiroli district. They well knew about the Utilization. Local people depend on the forest and its products for their livelihood. Most of the tribal people utilized available plants from surrounding for purposes of food, fodder, and medicine, spiritual and for handicraft purposes.

Beside Tendu leaves and Bamboo, aboriginals were depending on timber and other Non- Timber Forest Produce such as commercially important Medicinal and Plant resource. The area is rich in *Aegle marmelos* L., *Bambusa arundinaceae* L., *Bombax ceiba* L., *Borassus flabellifera* L., *Butea superba* Roxb., *Buchanania cochinchinensis* Lour., *Cleistanthus collinus* (Roxb).Benth.ex Hook.f., *Diospyros melanoxylon* Roxb., *Madhuca longifolia* var.latifolia, *Semecarpus anacardium* L.f..

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Study was conducted during July 2022 to February 2023. For the present study Etapalli tahsil of Gadchiroli District was selected. Methodology for present work was adopted from some of the earlier workers like Jain, (1987, 1988, 1989), Roy (1989), Jain and Sing (1997) and Gadgil *et.al* (2000, 2005, 2005a). The information regarding Spiritual, Cultural and Handicraft utilization of various plant species was obtained from local residents, Gayta, and knowledgeable persons from study area. Methodology has been divided in to Questionnaire while interactions, GPS photography, Field walks and group discussion.

To explore the study area frequent visits are arranged with 5 different knowledgeable persons. Information gathered from various interactions recorded in field diary and finally tabulated in table. The field visits and interactions were conducted in village's viz. Kandoli, Burgi, Koreli and Gattepali.

During field visits to study area information regarding plants was collected, photograph were taken by using GPS enabled camera but in these remote area due to non availability of network GPS coordinates not recorded in the images (Plate-1,2). Plants were identified by using standard literature (Hooker, 1872-1877; Cooke, 1967; Naik 1998; Singh and Karthikeyan 2000; Yadav and Sardesai 2002). Authentication of plants made by using local flora knowledgeable persons and with the help of local experts. All collected information tabulated in the form of table (Table-1) and figures (Figure 1-4).

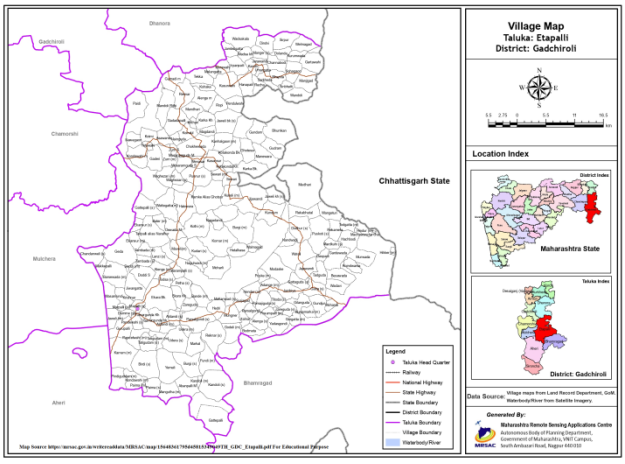


Fig: 1. Location Map of study area.

RESULTS

From the present study out of documented 31 plants through interactions with local knowledgeable persons, utilities recorded are like, Food-14, Worship-

7, Medecine-2, Craft-13, Fiber and making of leafy plates -5 each, fish poison-3, mosquito repellent and for the purpose of dying 01 each.

In the present study various plant parts like Fruit- 12, Leaves-11, Stem- 9, Seed and Bark - 03, Inflorescence-2 and Flower, Latex, Root and Whole plant- 01 each reported to be used for fulfilling various livelihood of local population of Etapalli Tahsil of Gadchiroli District.

Table 1: Plant Used by Tribal People's from Gadchiroli District of Maharashtra.

Sr No	Botanical Name	Monocot / Dicot	Family	Local Name	Gondi / Name	Plant Part Used by Gond community	Purposes of use
1.	*Aegle marmelos* L.	Dicot	Rutaceae	Bel	Mahka महाका	Fruit	The fruit is used in Worship and Fruit is also consumed as Food.
2.	*Azardirachta indica* L.	Dicot	Meliaceae	Neem	Vepamarha वेपा	Whole Plant	The whole plant parts are used in traditional medicine.
3.	*Bambusa arundinaceae* L.	Monocot	Poaceae	Bamboo	Vedur वेदूर	Stem	Stem is used as Bamboo Craft and For shed purpose and young shoot is used as Food.
4.	*Bombax ceiba* L.	Dicot	Malvaceae	Katesavar	Leki लेकी	Stem, flower	The Stem used to make Boat and Flower used in Spiritual purposes.
5.	*Boswellia serrata* Robx.	Dicot	Burseraceae	salai	Aale आले	Stem	Stem is used in marriage and also in religious ceremonies. Stem is used in make Boat for Animals to feed Fodder.
6.	*Borassus flabellifera* L.	Monocot	Arecaceae	Taad	Taadi ताडी	Fruit, Leaves, Inflorescence, Spadix, Petiole, Seed, Stem	Fruits consumed as raw. Leaves used as broom, handicraft. Inflorescence is used to make Beverages. The spadix and Petioles are used to make rope and Seed Consumed as food. Stem consumed as Food.
7.	*Butea superba* Roxb.	Dicot	Fabaceae	Palasvel	Motum मोटूम	Stem, Leave	Stem is used to make Ropes and Leaves are used to make plates.
8.	*Buchanania cochinchinensis* Lour.	Dicot	Anacardiaceae	Char	Reka रेखा	Leaves, Fruit	Leaves are used in Worship and to make Plates. Fruit is consumed as Food.
9.	*Caryota urens* L.	Monocot	Arecaceae	Gorka	Gohga गोह्गा	Inflorescence	Inflorescence is used to make Beverages.
10.	*Careya arborea* Roxb.	Dicot	Lecythidacae	Kubha	Kumul कुमुळ	Root	The Roots are used as poison for fishes.
11.	*Casearia tomentosa* Roxb.	Dicot	Salicaceae	modgi	Minah marha मिन्हा	Fruit	The Fruits are used as poison for fishes.
12.	*Chloroxylon swietenia* Roxb.	Dicot	Rutaceae	Behru	Nulle नुल्ले	Leaves	The Leaves are used to avoid Mosquito.
13.	*Cleistanthus collinus* (Roxb).Benth.ex Hook.f.	Dicot	Phyllanthaceae	Garadi	Olasa ओळसा	Stem, Bark	The Stem used for Timber. Bark is used as Poison for Fishes.
14.	*Cyperus rotundus* L.	Monocot	Cyperaceae	Nagarmotha	Mahaku महाकु	Stem	Stem are used to make Mats.

15.	*Diospyros malabarica* (Desr.) Kostel.	Dicot	Ebenaceae	Temburi	Tirka तिरका	Fruit	Dye is Extracted from Fruit.
16.	*Diospyros melanoxylon* Roxb.	Dicot	Ebenaceae	Tendu	Tumir तुमीर	Leaves, Fruit, Stem	The leaves are used to make Plates and Bowls. Fruit consumed as Food and Stem is used as Brush.
17.	*Grewia hirsute* vahl.	Dicot	Tiliaceae	Govli	Neyrachi नेयराची	Stem, Fruit	Stems are used as broom and Fruit are consumed as food.
18.	*Grewia tiliifolia* Vahl.	Dicot	Tiliaceae	Dhaman	Kehla केह्ला	Stem	Stem used as Axe handle shaft.
19.	*Hibiscus sabdariffa* L.	Dicot	Malvaceae	Ambadi	Jeyha जेया	Leaves, Fruit, Bark	Leaves and Fruit used as a leafy vegetable. Bark is used to make Rope.
20.	*Madhuca longifolia* var. latifolia	Dicot	Sapotaceae	Mahua	Irpi इरपी	Leaves, Fruit, Seed, Latex	Leaves are used in Worship and to make a plates and bowls. Fruit are consumed as food and used to make Mahua liquor. Oil is extracted from Mahua seed and White latex is used as worship.
21.	*Manilkara hexandra* Roxb.	Dicot	Sapotaceae	Khirni	Pale पाले	Fruit	Fruit is consumed as Food.
22.	*Oroxylum indicum* L.	Dicot	Bignoniaceae	Tattu	Kondhuhuta कोंधउटाह	Fruit	Fruits are used to make Pickle.
23.	*Phoenix sylvestris* Roxb.	Monocot	Arecaceae	Shindi	Indhi इंधी	Leaves, Stem	Leaves are used to make mat and Craft. Inner part of young stem is used as food.
24.	*Phoenix acaulis* Roxb.	Monocot	Arecaceae	Wild Shindi	Indhi इंधी	Leaves, Stem	Leaves are used in Worship and to make rope. Inner part of young stem is used as food. Leaves are used for shed purpose.
25.	*Pterocarpus marsupium* Roxb.	Dicot	Fabaceae	Beeja	Vengoh वेन्गोह	Leaves	Leaves are used as fodder for Animal.
26.	*Soymida febrifuga* (Roxb.) A. Juss.	Dicot	Meliaceae	Rohan	Rohdi रोहडी	Stem	Stem is used as Timber. Bark used as mat by local people.
27.	*Semecarpus anacardium* L.f.	Dicot	Anacardiaceae	Bibba	Kohka कोह्का	Leaves, Fruit, Seed	Leaves are used in Worship and to make a plates, bowls at spiritual time. Fruits are used as Food. Seeds are used to treatment of injury.
28.	*Sterculia urens* Roxb.	Dicot	Sterculiaceae	Sardol	Hitum हितूम	Bark	Bark is used to make Rope.
29.	*Tectona gradis* L. f.	Dicot	Verbenaceae	Sagwan	Teka टेका	Stem	The Stem of *Tectona* is used in different types of Furniture.
30.	*Terminalia elliptica* Wild.	Dicot	Combretaceae	Ain	Mardi मर्दी	Leaves, stem	Leaves are used in worship and Stem is used as Timber.
31.	*Xylia xylocarpa* Roxb.	Dicot	Mimosaceae	Suriya	Kali कडी	Stem, Seed	Stem is used as Timber and Seeds are Consumed as food.

PLATE: I

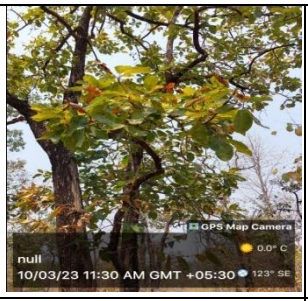
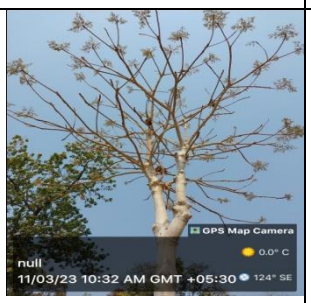
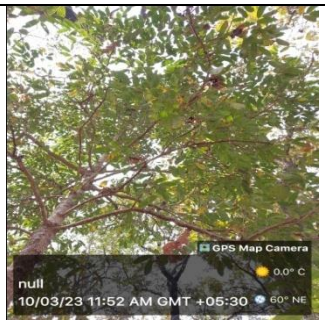
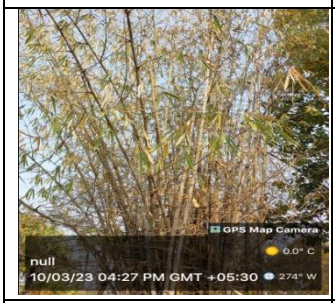
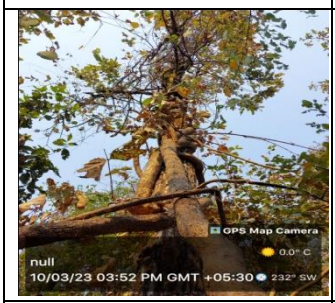
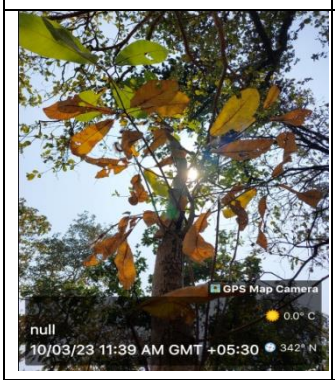
			
Chloroxylon swietenia Roxb.	*Madhuca longifolia* var. latifolia	*Tectona gradis* L. f.	*Pterocarpus marsupium* Roxb.
			
Diospyros malabarica (Desr.)Kostel.	*Terminalia elliptica* Wild.	*Azardirachta indica* L.	*Diospyros melanoxylo* Roxb.
			
Cleistanthus collinu (Roxb.) benth	*Sterculia urens* Roxb.	*Phoenix acaulis* Roxb.	*Phoenix sylvestri* Roxb.
			
Buchanania cochinchinensis Lour.	*Bombax ceiba* L.	*Casearia tomentosa* Roxb.	*Grewia hirsute* vahl.

PLATE: II

			
Chloroxylon swietenia Roxb.	*Boswellia serrata* Roxb.	*Careya arborea* Roxb.	*Hibiscus sabdariffa* L.
			
Bambusa arundinacea L	*Cyperus rotundus* L.	WORSHIP PLACE	*Xylia xylocarpa* Roxb.
			
Butea superba Roxb.	*Caryota urens* L.	*Soymida febrifuga* (Roxb.) A. Juss.	*Phoenix acaulis* Roxb.
			
Semecarpus anacardium L.f.	WORSHIP PLACE	Bamboo basket	Teak wood Container for Tobacco

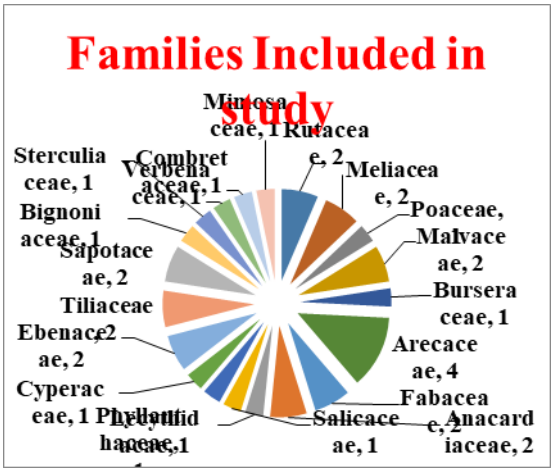


Fig: 3 Representation of families in study.

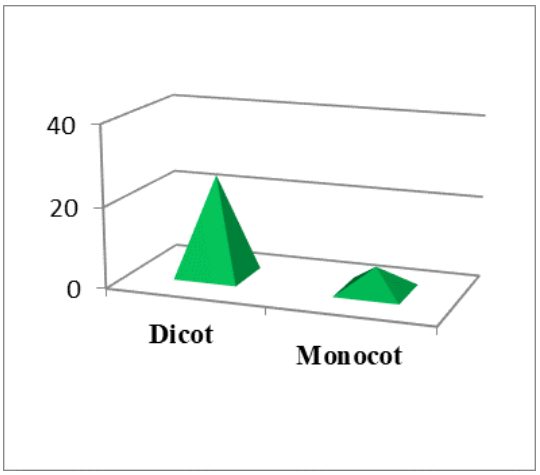


Fig: 2 Proportion of Dicot and Monocot Plants from study area.

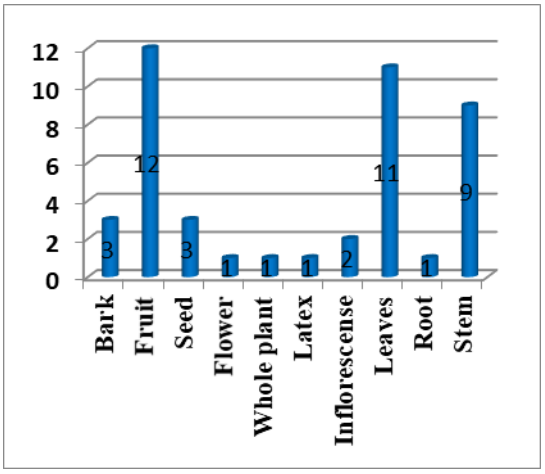


Fig: 4 Plant parts used by local community from study area.

DISCUSSION:

In present study we have documented Cultural, spiritual and handicraft uses of 31 plant species important to local peoples of Etapalli tahsil, some of these plants mentioned by Chavan (2014) for medicinal uses in and around Etapalli forest range in Gadchiroli district. In present study importance of 31 different plant species from Etapalli Tahsil of Gadchiroli district described for religious, cultural and other purposes while, Sharma *et. al.* (2014) has given idea regarding rites, sacred, taboo, ceremony and magical beliefs from Tripura state, few of the utilities of plant species are found common in both area. Anju *et. al.* (2018) has studied Biogenic Properties of Indian Tribal Plants from Tamilnadu state. Some of the plants mentioned in present study are also mentioned in the report of Science and Technology Resource center, Gondwana University Gadchiroli.

Herbal fish stupefying plants are widely used by local community since long time and these methods are supposed to be eco friendly also. In present study roots, fruit and bark of *Careya arborea* Roxb, *Casearia tomentosa* Roxb and *Cleistanthus collinus* (Roxb). Benth. ex Hook.f. used by local people as fish stupefying plant. Heda and Kulkarni (2009) also mentioned these plants used for the same purpose from Mendha (Lekha) village from Dhanora Tahsil of Gadchiroli District.

Deogaonkar, (2008) has mentioned some of the Traditional handicrafts of the Gond tribes of Vidarbha region from Maharashtra, Dahare and Jain (2010) from Multai, District Betul, Madhya Pradesh; Sharma and Pegu (2011) studied Religious and supernatural beliefs of the missing Tribes of Assam State, Khan (2013) from Thane District, Khonde *et. al* (2014) from Gadchiroli dist, Chavhan and Margonwar (2015) from

Markanda forest range of Gadchiroli District, Shambharkar and Gogle (2017) and Shende (2017) from Gadchiroli District, Chhetri *et. al* (2020) has studied Socio-cultural and religious use of plants by ethnic communities of Darjeeling and Sikkim, Sawane *et. al.* 2020 From Gadchiroli District, Sanjib and Shashi (2021) from Orissa; Mishra *et.al.*(2021) from Maharashtra, Jakhi P. S., (2021) has mentioned uses of various medicinal plants from Gadchiroli district of Maharashtra and Naqvi et al. (2022) also studied ethnobotanical information of various plants from seminary hill area of Nagpur. Various plants mentioned in present study also mentioned in above cited literature for economical, spiritual, cultural and other purposes from different geographical areas of India.

CONCLUSION:

1. The main objective of the present study is to document the plant species used by local people of Etapalli tahsil for Cultural, Worship and handicraft purposes. A total 31 species from 20 families are documented out of these, 25 plant species belongs to 17 Dicot families and 6 plant species belongs to 3 monocot families.
2. From present study it has been observed that more than one part of plant is used for economical, spiritual, cultural and handicraft purpose.
3. It has been observed that tribal Gond community from Etapalli tahsil is giving importance to food, and Craft purposes while importance is also given to purposes like worship, fiber, plate making, fish poisoning and mosquito repellant as well as dying purpose.
4. A lot to be done in this promising field of livelihood of tribal people with the active support of village people so that importance of knowledge regarding utilities of plant species for various purposes could be rejuvenated for the benefit of our future generations and also need to improve living standard of local people.

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Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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