


Review Article
FOLK MEDICINE AMONG TRIBE PEOPLE- A REVIEW
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ABSTRACT

Today ancient Ayurvedic texts have been researched and a lot of hidden knowledge has been brought to surface light and Ayurveda is becoming one of the leading scientific way of preserving and promoting a healthy life. On the other-hand we do not know much about another type of medicine which is more ancient, equally efficacious and widely practised by its adherents: Folk medicines. Folk medicine was practised during Atharva vedic period and it is still practised in 21st century by tribal people, villagers and even by some people of cities who still adheres to their ancestor knowledge in India. Folk medicine has its own concept of causation of disease, diagnostic techniques and treatment. In history of Indian medicine little or almost no attention has been given to folk medicine, on the other-hand tribal and village people believe in folk medicine as it fits in with their culture and way of thinking. If we want that these people can derive benefit from Ayurveda or modern medicine then we have to take pain to see that today's medicine is presented to them in such a way that it is 'acceptable' to them. We can make it 'acceptable' only if we know what they believe in. So here effort was made to recollect knowledge about folk medicine in India so that it not remain patchy and inadequate and helps to promote healthy life.

KEYWORDS: Tribal, Folk medicine, Traditional medicine.

INTRODUCTION
Atharva-Vedic period

During Atharva-vedic period there existed two types of healing art: the first type depended upon sacrificial practices and magical verses and second type depended more on empirical or rational use of herbal medicine. It appears in later time, the distinction between above two type become more marked i.e., Ayurvedic practitioner who practised sophisticated art of herbs while the practitioner of magics confined themselves to tribes and village population. In this period committing sin in present or even past, disrespect of God, Evil spirits are some of major factors that lead to different diseases. For example *Varuna*, the cloud God cause many diseases but mainly dropsy i.e., swelling up of whole body. To get relief, a hymn in praise of the God was recited. Rudra's special way of inflicting illness was to shoot

arrows at the victim thus causing acute pains. *Takman* was the God that caused fever. Disorders of the mind were generally attributed to possession of the body by *Bhut*^[1] (Demon). Treatment of diseases depends upon the views about their causation. As in case of leprosy, addressing a dark coloured plant, the priest chanted the hymn. Treatment of Jaundice by magic consisted transferring the redness to patient from red objects and creatures. An amulet consisting of piece of bull's skin steeped in cow milk and ghee was tied around the neck. The red colour of the sun and cow are supposed to come to patient body and yellow colour is supposed to go to the bird of yellow colour. In Atharv-veda the amulets^[2] are widely used and herbs and animal provide largest number of amulets. Some herbs and animal amulets used in this period are below in table.

Table 1: Amulets uses^[3]

Amulets	Uses
<i>Devdara (Pinus deodara)</i>	To obtain long life
Head of stalk of <i>Shara (Saccharaum munja)</i>	Cure of excessive discharge (<i>Pradara</i>)
Three pieces of fallen bark of <i>Usheer (Andropogon muricatus)</i>	Used in Venereal diseases
<i>Katutumbi (Lagenaria vulgaris)</i>	Against the poison of serpents
Root of <i>Karir (Capparis aphylla)</i>	Against worms in the child

<i>Yava (Hordeum vulgare)</i>	Against an evil eye
Seeds of <i>Sarshapa (Brassica alba)</i>	To protect pregnant women
Tongues of three bird parrot, crow and lark	For acquiring wisdom
Ivory and elephant hair wrapped with gold wire or pearl shell	For long life
Skin of black antelope	To promote virility
Wool of male animal wrapped with pieces of <i>Prosopis spicigera</i> and <i>Ficus religiosa</i>	To secure birth of male child

The different hymns and amulets are used in this period and we can witness the same phenomenon on tribal society today also.

Classical Indian medicine period

Ayurveda base Charaka and Shusruta did not get rid of magico-religious concepts of medicine. "Balagraha" first reference was seen in Rigvedas^[4] in which *Bhutas* menacing fetus and neonates. It is also described in Shusruta Samhita^[5] as nine different diseases of children caused by nine malignant beings. Vagbhatta^[6] has added three more *Grahas* thus total number become twelve which has been classified as male and female *Grahas*. In Sushruta Samhita it was said that it was narrated by Lord Shiva himself and indicates hidden diseases. Charak samhita has direct references of *Graha* however 'Deva' cause various disorders like *Graha*. Later Chakradutt contains full description of 'Kumara-Tantra' of Ravana in which twelve *Bala Grahas* are mentioned. In connection with the treatment of the diseases caused by these *Grahas* different herbal combination and treatment discriminated like *Pradeha*, *Parisekana*, *Abhyanga*, *Bali*, *Snana*, *Dhupana* and *Dharana* were given.^[7] Eight categories of supernatural spirit are mentioned in Shusruta Samhita Uttara Sthana that cause

diseases in human beings. Super human influences who roam in world in quest of offerings, innate tendency of mischief, cruelty etc are classified under eight groups: the *Devas* (Deities), *Asuras*, *Gandharvas*, *Yakshas*, *Pitris* (manes), *Bhujangas* (serpent-deities), *Rakshasas* (Monsters) and *Pisachas* (Goblins). Along with this dreams and *Arista* i.e., ominous signs are also described by Shusruta and Charaka like in sixth chapter of Indriya Sthana of Charaka samhita it was said that man who feels great pain in upper region of chest while speaking is ominous sign one or two day prior to death.^[8] Samhitas do not lag behind in deviation of the outcome of the diseases in patient through omens, *Graha*, dreams. This aspect of practice of medicine is prevalent in tribal today also. In Arthshastra of Kautilya magical formulas are given which can make whole population fall asleep and cause blindness and death to the enemy.

Muslim Period

Firdausul-Hikmat (Paradise of wisdom), a book of medicine by Ali b. Rabban describe what people think about spirits and their possession.^[9] In book Ayeen Akbery some of the beliefs of people about the causation and treatment of different diseases are mentioned i.e., described here in table.^[10]

Diseases	Cause	Treatment
Headache	Punishment for having spoken irrelevantly to father and mother	Making image of Kasyapa and Aditi that represented of <i>Devtas</i> images by two <i>Tolaks</i> (approx. 22g) of gold.
Madness	Punishment for disobedience to father and mother	Perform Chandrayana i.e., to eat on first day only one mouthful, two mouthfuls on second day and thus increase one each day for a month and then decrease gradually till he leaves off as he began and make image of Kasyapa and Aditi from two <i>Tolas</i> of gold and give them to poor.
Epilepsy	Punishment for administered poison to anyone at the command of the master	Charity of two such images as last described and repeat Mantras in the name of Mahadeo
Pain in the eyes	Punishment for having coveted another men's wife	Performing the fast of <i>Chadrayana</i>
Blindness	Punishment for killing mother	Performing ceremony of <i>Prajapatya</i> which is of five kind like feeding 12 Brahmins, charity of cow etc.
Dumbness	Punishment for killing sister	Form a cow of following description i.e., the body of 4 <i>Tolas</i> gold, hoofs 2 <i>Tolas</i> of silver, hump 2 or 3 <i>Mashas</i> of copper
Stomach ache	Punishment for eating with person of different religion or with liar	Fasting three days charity of 12 <i>Tolas</i> of silver
Stone	Punishment for committed incest with mother	Perform ceremony of <i>Madhu-dhenu</i> i.e., he must conceive in his imagination

Lameness	Punishment for kicking Brahmin	Form 1 <i>Tolah</i> of gold in form of horse and then bestow the charity. Give food to 108 Brahmins
Cough	Punishment for killing a Brahmin	Make lotus of four <i>Tolas</i> of gold and then ceremony of Hawan and offer that to Brahmin
Fever	Punishment for killing innocent <i>Kashatriya</i>	100 chanting of Mahadeo, feeding 13 Brahmins

Thus we see that the belief in sins, demons and magic as cause of disease was deep rooted and widespread in ancient India. This forms the largest source of material practised by tribal people as medicine.

Tribal people

Tribal people constitute 8.6 percent of India's total population, about 104 million people according to the 2011 census (68 million people according to the 1991 census). This is the largest population of the tribal people in the world. One concentration lives in a belt along the Himalayas stretching through Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh, and Uttar Pradesh in the west, to Assam, Meghalaya, Tripura, Arunachal Pradesh, Mizoram, Manipur, and Nagaland in the northeast. Another concentration lives in the hilly areas of central India (Madhya Pradesh, Orissa, and, to a lesser extent, Andhra Pradesh); in this belt, which is bounded by the Narmada River to the north and the Godavari River to the southeast, tribal

peoples occupy the slopes of the region's mountains. Other tribals, the Santals, live in Bihar and West Bengal. There are smaller numbers of tribal people in Karnataka, Tamil Nadu, and Kerala, in western India in Gujarat and Rajasthan, and in the union territories of Lakshadweep and the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.^[11]

Physical characters, racial derivatives and spoken languages of these tribal people differ widely and they are grouped together because of their common way of belief and way of life. Different tribes live in different economic stages, ranging from hunting and food gathering to shifting and settled cultivation. Thus Birhor and Kharia in Bihar, Kuki and Nagas in Assam hills, Jaung in Orissa etc live mainly by hunting and gathering. The Maria and Gond in Madhya Pradesh, Gond, Saora in Orissa etc live mainly by shifting cultivation. Tharu in U.P, Khasi in Assam, Irula in Madras etc live by settled agriculture. Some tribes of India are described here in table. ^[12]

State	Tribes
Jammu and Kashmir	Bakarwal, Balti, Beda, Bot, Brokpa, Drokpa, Dard, Shin, Changpa, Gaddi, Garra, Gujjar, Mon, Purigpa, Sippi
Himachal Pradesh	Bhot, Gaddi, Gujajr, Jad, Lamba, Khampa, Kanaura, Lahaula, Panwala, Swangla
Uttranchal	Bhotia, Buksa, Gujajr, Jannsari, Raji, Tharu
Uttar Pradesh	Bhotia, Buksa, Jaunsari, Raji, Tharus
Rajasthan	Bhil, Bhil mina, Damor, Damaria, Dhanka, Tadvi, Tetaria, Valvi, Garasia (excluding Rajput Garasia), Kathodi, Katkari, Dhor Kathodi, Dhor Katkari, Son Kathodi, Son Katkari, Kokna, Kokni, Kukna, Koli Dhor, Tokre Koli, Kolcha, Kolgha, Mina
Bihar	Sur, Baiga, Banjara, Bathudi, Bedia, Bhumij (in North Chotanagpur and South Chotanagpur divisions and Santal Parganas district), Binjhia, Birhor, Birjia, Chero, Chik Baraik, Gond, Gorait, Ho, Karmali, Kharia, Kharwar, Khond, Kisan, Kora, Korwa, Lohara, Lohra, Mahli, Mal Paharia, Munda, Oraon, Parhaiya, Santal, Sauria Paharia, Savar
Sikkim	Bhutia (including Chumbipa, Dophthapa, Dukpa, Kagatey, Sherpa, Tibetan, Tromopa, Yolmo)
Arunachal Pradesh	Abor, Aka, Apatani, Dafla, Galong, Khampti, Howa, Mishmi, Momb, Any Naga tribe, Sherdukpen
Manipur	Aimol, Anal, Angami, Chiru, Chothe, Gangte, Hmar, Kabui, Kacha Naga, Koirao, Koirang, Kom, Lamgang, Mao, Maram, Maring, Any Mizo (Lushai) tribes, Monsang, Moyon, Paite, Purum, Ralte, Sema, Simte, Suhte, Tangkhul, Thadou, Vaiphui, Zou
Mizoram	Hakma, Dimasa (Kachari), Garo
Tripura	Riang, Bhil, Bhutia, Chaimal, Chakma, Garoo, Halam, Jamatia, Khasia, Kuki, Lepcha, Lushai, Mag, Munda, Kaur, Noatia, Orang
Meghalya	Boro Kacharis, Chakma, Dimasa, Kachari, Garo, Hajong, Hmar, Khasi, Jaintia, Synteng, Pnar, War, Bhoi, Lyngngam, Koch, Kuki Tribes, Lakher, Man (Tai speaking), Any Mizo (Lushai) tribe, Mikir, Any Naga tribes, Pawi, Raba, Rava, Synteng
Assam	Chakma, Dimasa, Kachari, Garo, Hajong, Hmar, Khasi, Jaintia, Synteng, Pnar, War, Bhoi, Lyngngam, Any Kuki Tribes, Man (Tai speaking), Any Mizo (Lushai) tribes, Mikir, Any

	Naga tribes, Pawi, Syntheng, Barmans in Cachar, Boro, Borokachari, Deori, Hojai, Kachari, Sonwal, Lalung, Mech, Miri, Rabha
West Bengal	Asur, Baiga, Bedia, Bediya, Bhumij, Bhutia, Sherpa, Toto, Dukpa, Kagatay, Tibetan, Yolmo, Birhor, Birjia, Chakma, Chero, Chik Baraik, Garo, Gond, Gorait, Hajang, Ho, Karmali, Kharwar, Khond, Kisan, Kora, Korwa, Lepcha, Lodha, Kheria, Kharia, Lohara, Lohra, Magh, Mahali, Mal Pahariya, Mech, Mru, Munda, Nagesia, Oraon, Parhaiya. Rabha, Santal, Sauria Paharia, Savar
Jharkhand	Asur, Baiga, Banjara, Bathudi, Bedia, Binjhia, Birhor, Birjia, Chero, Chick Baraik, Gond, Gorait, Ho, Karmali, Kharia, Kharwar, Khond, Kisan, Kora, Korwa, Lohra, Mahli, Mal Pahariya, Munda, Oraon, Parhaiya, Santhal, Sauria Paharia, Savar, Bhumij
Orissa	Bagata, Baiga, Banjara, Banjar, Bathudi, Bhottada, Dhotada, Bhuiya, Bhuyan, Bhumia, Bhumij, Bhunjia, Binjha, Binjhia, Binjhoa, Birhor, Bondo Poraja, Chenchu, Dal, Desua Bhumij, Dharua, Didaya, Gadaba, Gandia, Ghar, Gond, Gondo, Ho, Holva, Jatapu, Juang, Kandha Gauda, Kawar, Kharia, Kharian, Kharwar, Khond, Kond, Kandha, Nanguli Kandha, Sitha Kandha, Kisan, Kol, Kolah Loharas, Kol Loharas, Kolha, Koli, Malhar, Kondadora, Kora, Korua, Kotia, Koya, Kulis, Lodha, Madia, Mahali, Mankidi, Mankirdia, Matya, Mirdhas, Munda, Munda Lohara, Munda Mahalis, Mundari, Omanatya, Oraon, Parenga, Paroja, Pentia, Rajuar, Santal, Saora, Savar, Saura, Sahara, Shabar, Lodha, Sounti, Tharu
Goa	Dhodia, Dubla (Halpati), Naikda (Talavia), (Nayaka), Varli
Chattisgarh	Agariya, Andh, Baiga, Bhaina, Bharia Bhumia, Bhuinhar Bhumia, Bhumiya, Bharia, Paliha, Pando, Bhattra, Bhil, Bhilala, Barela, Patelia, Bhil Mina, Bhunjia, Biar, Biyar, Binjhar, Birhul, Birhor, Damor, Damaria, Dhanwar, Gadaba, Gadba
Madhya Pradesh	Agariya, Andh, Baiga, Baigas, Bhaina, Bharia Bhumia, Bhuinhar Bhumia, Bhumiya, Bharia, Paliha, Pando, Bhatti, Bhil, Bhilala, Barela, Patelia, Bhil Mina, Bhunjia, Biar, Biyar, Binjhar, Birhul, Birhor, Damor, Damaria, Dhanwar, Gadaba, Gadba

Causation of diseases in tribe people^[13]

Only a few diseases are described to natural cause by the tribal people. Syphilis and gonorrhoea are two among them. The Baigas in Madhya Pradesh believe that syphilis lives in women's vagina and one gets it by going to her but it might also be caused by eating hot things and drinking too much Mahua liquor. When a man goes out every day in sun, he gets fever and turns into Gonorrhoea. Also it is caused by stepping over a place where someone has urinated or one may also get it by going to a woman in her menses. Other diseases described to natural cause by many tribal people are headache, diarrhoea, cough etc. In all these diseases physical factors like water, weather, heat or cold, excessive indulgence in sex, liquor is playing the causative role. Except few diseases all rest are caused by supernatural agencies.

Supernaturals may be following

Wrath of Goddesses- For the wrath of Goddess to be the cause of an illness, the most important example is Small-pox. Small pox is caused by Sitala Mata, one of the seven sisters, who produce pustular diseases. *Sitala* is worshipped among many tribal communities so she may not let small-pox. In tribe Sikligars of Punjab, Sitala worship takes place on the seventh day of light-half of month of Sawan. This is called Sitala-Saptami. Tribe Tharus in Uttar Pradesh believe in Mata Bhawani collective name for seven sisters goddesses, which sends disease and epidemics. As Sitala causes small pox, cloves, betel-nut, coconuts and

fire sacrifices are offered to her. Among Lodhas of Bengal, Sitala has six sisters that are named on basis of epidemic diseases. Like Lata Goria- a fatal type of small-pox turning the body black, Milmata or measles, Olautha or tropical cholera, Baincha i.e. Chicken pox resembles *Flacourtia sepriaria* (bainch fruit). Saoras tribe from Kerala, Orissa, Madras, Andhra believe small pox caused by mensuration of goddess. They do not worship goddess but drag her out of village. Tribe Malers of Bihar worship Charka Gossaiyan when endemic hits. Syntengs in Jaintia hills in Assam consider it great honour to be touched by small pox goddess. Deeper the marks greater the honour. Another Goddess called Mari Mata is believed by the Balahis of Madhya Pradesh to cause Cholera. Mata Masani is said to cause emaciation among Sikligar children in Punjab. Baigas of Madhya Pradesh believe Durpatta Mata obstructs delivery and thus kills both child and mother. The Goddesses that bring diseases, death among humans are portrayed among all tribal communities and are appeased only by appropriate offerings and sacrifices like Jappi mata in Baigas is the sleeping disease and she demands Ghee and little jaggery to cure.

2. Spirits: Non-human- Spirits of sickness, demons
Human-Ancestral spirit, Bhut and churel
3. Sorcery
4. Witchcraft
5. Evil eye

6. Breach of Taboo

Diagnosis by Tribe people^[14]

Just as it is important for patient to know the cause of fever whether it is due to virus, mosquito, bacteria similarly for the tribal people it is important to know whether a particular diseases in patient is due to wrath of Goddess, work of evil spirit etc. Just as we begin with 'History of present illness' so does the tribal man by interrogation. He interrogates patient in order to find whether he by intention or otherwise broken a taboo, has been disrespectful to tribal God. He ask the patient about his dreams. The Saoras tribe of Orissa, Kerala, Madras and Andhra believe that there can be no disease without a spirit being its cause and there is different species for each diseases. Diagnosis made by tribe man through different test. Most popular test is Bel leaf (*Aegle marmelos*) test. The medicine-man lights lamp and place it in winnowing fan half filled with rice. He takes bel leaves one by one and in each puts an unbroken grain of rice. He holds the leaf in flame of lamp and recites names. The answer is given by the grain of rice turning black and sticking to the leaf or by the leaf curves in the heat. After the preliminary enquiries, the medicine-man (Ojha) looks at face of patient and asks him to put out his tongue in order to examine it. He also feels the pulse at his wrist. A good Ojha is said to be able to distinguish 23 different types of pulses in each arm. Interpretation of pulse tells him cause of diseases, like if pulse comes towards the index finger it is sign that Orak Bonga are at work. The pulse is further supposed to reveal weather the complaint is due to sudden fright, inflammation or poison. On the basis of diagnosis Ojha treats the patient with incantations and jhar (cleansing) etc. Among the Malers tribe whenever person falls ill, the Guru (medicine-man) perform Telpatta to know cause of disease. He takes leaf of Shaal (*Shorea robusta*) and few drops of mustard oil on it. He moves his index finger on it and names a particular Gossaiyan. Then he search for black spot on leaf. If he finds that spot he identifies particular disease caused by particular gossaiyan.

Among the Ho's tribe, if the Deonwa (medicine man) finds difficulty in coming to diagnosis, he do Dukidamal "examination of urine". A small quantity of Dukida or urine is brought in leaf-cup early in morning by patient. The Deonwa puts drop of mustard oil on it and studies the reaction carefully. From nature of reaction he makes diagnosis whether the disease is caused by Njom (A sort of poison administered by a sorcerer or witch) or Tiji (Foreign particles) and then treats it accordingly. Other method is Bonganam. Handful of rice touches with body of patient brings to Deonwa, who notices

displacement of rice and spirit is being named. This gives clue of cause of disease. Other methods are named as Danda man, Rum Rum. Among Gond and Bhumia, there are several methods of diagnosis but most common are Winnowing fan and gourd, Urda grains wrapped in green leaf, Bahari-Kari. (The religion of Indian tribe. Elwin, V. (1939) Oxford University press.

Among the Balahis of Nimir district in Madhya Pradesh when person get ill they consult Barwa (medicine man) and if patient shows no improvement then another medicine man Janka is consulted. if the diseases is suspected to have been caused by Witchcraft, among Gond and bhumia, all suspected women touch red hot iron bar after dipping hands in melted ghee. The women have to grip hands on hot iron and then slide down the whole length. The women whose hands do not get burnt, is certified as witch and culprit for disease cause.

Treatment^[15]

The treatment of a disease depends upon what is held to be the cause of that disease. If an educated man believes that the cause of Malaria is Malarial parasite which reaches the blood stream through the bite of an infected mosquito, then to get cure take quinine or allied drug and to prevent further attacks he tries to keep away from mosquito. In similar way tribal man believes the cause of disease to be wrath of god, evil spirit, then to treat that diseases he takes such measures as are appropriate for its cure. To prevent further attack they wears amulet and take other precaution as necessary.

Propitiation of cause

Due to disrespect or disregard to god, propitiation takes different shapes with different tribal people. It includes religious prayers, incantations, offering animal sacrifices. Irula of the south indulge in this form of prayer. The male Irula beats drum and when it reach its climax, patient breaks coconut and incense so as to propitiate the God. Man's wife standing nearby sprinkles turmeric water over him. The Balahis of Nimar, Madhya Pradesh on breakout of Cholera worshipped Hela (Buffalo calf) and then sacrifices the animal in honour of Mata Marai, the Goddess of cholera. The Sikligars of Punjab propitiate Mata Masani which when enraged causes emaciation in children. Emaciation in children among them labeled as Masani. In order to propitiate this Goddess the child is taken where Shrine is located like in Hissar, Kalkaji, Mubarkpur etc. A huge earthen Dia with 32 wicks at sides is taken. In central hollow of this lamp flowers, pistachio nuts and perfumes are placed. Mustard oil

is put and lighted. There it is left alone and worshippers go home.

Empirical medicine

While tribes believe illness by spirits etc but tribal people have gathered knowledge about the efficacy of different herbal preparation empirically

and this knowledge has been gradually enlarged in the process of passing from one generation to next. Baigas (Lives in Mandala and Balaghat district of Madhyapradesh) use different preparation for different stages of diseases. Some diseases with their herbs that they use for treatment is described here:

Diseases	Treatment
Fever	<i>Gurbel (Tinospora Cordifolia)</i> , <i>Tikur (Curcuma angustifolia)</i> , <i>Bara osai (Vitex peduncularis)</i>
Diarrhoea	<i>Saj (Terminalia tomentosa)</i> , <i>Tinsa (Ongeinia dalbergiodes)</i> , <i>Karar (Bauhinia purpurea)</i> , <i>Kadadhari (Eleusine aegyptaca)</i> , <i>Karikorai (Holarrhena antidysenterica)</i> , <i>Kassi (Bridelia retusa)</i>
Gonorrhoea	<i>Kurkoti (Pachystoma senile)</i> , <i>Bhawarsal (Hymenodictyon excelsum)</i> , <i>Dhan-baker (Cassia fistula)</i> , <i>Ramdatan (Smilax macrosphylla)</i> , <i>Chandrajot (Jatropha curcas)</i> , <i>Behera (Terminalia bellarica)</i> , <i>Muhmundi (Thespesia lampoas)</i>
Itching	<i>Sarai (Boswellia serrata)</i>
Broken bones	<i>Harsingri (Nyctanthes arbortristis)</i> , <i>Bija (Pterocarpus marsupium)</i>
Impotence	<i>Musri (Curculigo orchiodes)</i> , <i>Aonla (Embelica officinalis)</i>
Aches	<i>Mahua (Basssia latifolia)</i> , <i>Birhol (Indigofera pulchella)</i>
Syphilis	<i>Ban semar (Galactia tenuiflora)</i> , <i>Hasiyadaphar (Baliospermum axillare)</i> , <i>Bel (Aegle marmelos)</i> , <i>Ghol (Portulaca oleracea)</i> , <i>Dikamali (Gadenia lucida)</i> , <i>Indravan (Coccinia indica)</i>

Some diseases with their treatment source used by Gond and Bhumia of Mandla in Madhya Pradesh is described in table.

Diseases	Treatment
Body swell due to kidney disease	Prepare medicine of Cobra flesh.
Rheumatism	Use mixture of Jackals fat flesh of <i>Asaria</i> snake.
Indigestion and stomach pain	Tail of <i>Asaria</i> snake (non-poisonous) is taken and stomach of patient is beaten with it.

Saoras of Ganjam and Koraput in Orissa like other tribal people combine empirical treatment with the magical. Examples of diseases with source of treatment are as follows:

Diseases	Treatment
Fever	Concoction of red ants.
To assist lactation	Raw <i>Pappaya</i>
Worms and intestinal troubles	<i>Chiretta (Justica paniculata)</i>

Traditional medicinal plants used in Himachal pradesh for diseases are described in table.

Diseases	Treatment
Urinary tract infection	<i>Bichu-buti (Urtica dioica)</i>
Joint pains	<i>Shingli-mingli (Dioscorea deltoiea)</i> , <i>Buras (Rhododendron ferrugineum)</i>
For cardiac problems	<i>Bhutkeshi (selenium vaginatum)</i> , <i>Basant (Hypericum perforatum)</i>
For reproductive system problems	<i>Nagchatri (Trillium govanianum)</i> , <i>Salam panja (Dactylorhiza hatagirea)</i> , <i>Guchhi (Morchella esculenta)</i> , <i>Shivlingi (Bryonia laciniosa)</i>
Diabetes	<i>Neelkanthi (Ajuga bracteosa)</i>

Some treatment uses for diseases by South India villages or tribes are as follows

Diseases	Treatment prescribed
Fever	Apply paste of leaves of <i>Justicia adhatoda</i> , <i>Acacia farnesiana</i> on the forehead. Take decoction of black cumin. Warm the horn of an old ox and fomentation of buttocks is done. Apply mixture of lime, indigo and citrus for 3 days. If it burns apply curd.
Rheumatism	Wear the ritual copper pendent or silver ring.
Small pox	Pray the Goddess (Devi) and offers gift of oil and ghee for 9 to 11 days.
Chicken pox	Take a hot oil bath and burn incense (<i>Bdellium</i>) until the patient feel suffocated.
Measles	Smear the patient with red soil and expose to hot sun, Give bath in the evening.
Leprosy	Worship the snake. Get bitten by Cobra. Worship the sun.
Rickets	Undergo the ritual of ear piercing. Wear the ritual head or ritual cord round the neck. Wear Talisman containing camphor and holy ash prepared by specialist.

Whooping cough	Worship Goddess Dyamavva and offers oil and ghee.
Cholera	Give mixture of juice of waved leaved-fig tree (<i>Ficus infectoria</i>) and goat's milk. Mixture of butter milk and camphor. Drink half cup every three hours. Give liquid solution made of horn of spotted antelope. Before sunrise go three times round the <i>Calotropis gigantea</i> and worship it on behalf of patient.
Paralysis	Take root of <i>Ficus glomerate</i> and mix it with juice of Acacia catechu, betel nut and cloves in appropriate measure. Take mixture of seven garlics, seven black peppers, seven cloves, and leaves of <i>Acacia farnesiana</i> .
Impotency	Worship Hanuman monkey God. Take mixture of sweet curd, leaves of wild goose berry and inside stalk of banana tree.
Barrenness	Worship <i>Anisochilus carnosus</i> (Panjiri ka pat or Kapurli). Worship the holy basil. Take a mixture of milk hedge and dried garlic in appropriate measures. Wash hair with saffron and eat porridge made of great millet for 3 days during menstruation.
Malaria	Decoction of leaves of holy basil, <i>Justeia adhatoda</i> , margosa tree, <i>Cocculus cordifolius</i> . Pound seven bed-bugs with seven betel leaves, seven peppers and cloves, take mixture.
Headache	Apply to forehead washing soda and lime
Cough	Eat the ripe guava.
Cold	Eat raw egg. Drink lukewarm water with eucalyptus oil. Before going to bed, eat parched rice and avoid drinking water.
Hysteria	Burn chilli until the person feels suffocated with its smoke.
Neurosis	Tie a cord to toes and go on tightening it by turning the rod until patient feels immediate improvement. Offers gifts and vows to community god.
Typhoid	Take decoction of black cumin, <i>Morus indica</i> . Decoction of two betel leaves, betel nut, seven garlics, seven red millets, seven peppers and seven cloves. Hold a red-hot weeding hook over patient's head and pour water on the hook.
Dysentary	Take mixture of cardamom and clarified butter.
Diarrhoea	Mixture of Bishop's weed, clarified butter. Eat warm cooked rice with ghee in it. Take decoction of the leaves of <i>Uraria lagopodioides</i> . Mixture of ripe banana, nutmeg and ghee. Decoction of <i>Astercantha longifolia</i> and black cumin. Mixture of curds and leaves of pomegranate.
Jaundice	Wear magical bead round the neck. Eat gum of Balanites. Eat leaves of horse-radish.
Eye inflammation	Use drops of juice of yellow thistle. Blow ritual formula on the afflicted area. Pour drops of green ginger into nostrils. Blow smoke of tobacco. For adults apply juice of green chilli. For children apply paste made on wooden ladle. Apply <i>Acalypha indica</i> in affected area.
Ear infection	Use drops of mixture of sulphur and coconut oil.
Scabies	Use drops of cat's and rabbit's urine. Use of milk of yellow thistle. Apply paste of garlic.
Dog bite	Pour ritual water on affected part. Apply mud or lime.
Scorpion bite	Apply ritual formula on affected part.

	Dip affected part in kerosene. Apply paste of <i>Achyranthes asperalin</i> . Apply juice of onion and citron.
Snake bite	Soak leaves of Margosa, grown in vicinity of temple, in water and drink until vomiting starts. Eat tobacco until vomiting starts.

CONCLUSION

We need to keep in mind that our success will neither in looking down in the way of life of those people nor will it be in ridiculing their systems of belief or custom but show respect for cultural differences. This does not mean reconciling oneself to folk notions of diseases. What is important is to recognise that rational and non-rational are culturally determined. What may be non-rational to us might be the only or best solution for tribals and what sound scientific to us may not be understandable to them. Today few social anthropologist social scientists mostly foreigners studied some tribal in general. In empirical treatment they use different kind of herbs internally or externally. Their herbs and way of using herbs for diseases should be tested scientifically, so that rational and non-rationality should come forward. Good medicines and efficient hygiene techniques reach to these peoples and this largely depend on the degree to which scientific medical practice divest itself from western side and clothe itself in the Indian tribal area.

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