

## Research Article

# Ethnomedicinal Plants Used By “Ho” Tribes for Child-Birth in West Singhbhum District of Jharkhand, India

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## A B S T R A C T

West Singhbhum district extends from 21°58' & 23° 36' N Latitude 85° 0' & 86° 54' E Longitude with total area 5290.89 sq. km and the district is bounded on the North by the district of Khunti, on the East by Seraikella-Kharsawan district, on the South by Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Sundergarh districts of Odisha and on the West by the district of Simdega and Sundergarh (Odisha). The major rivers are Koel, Karo-Koina, Sanjal, Roro, Deo and Baitarani. There are several water falls, marshy lands, swamps and forests which have a plenty of ethno medicinal plants. There are many tribal people inhabitants in these areas. Munda, Birhor, Puran, Oraon, Ho, Santhal, Majhi and Kol are main tribal people. Out of these Ho is larger population in number. The “Ho” tribe used different types of ethno medicinal plants for childbirth period. There are nearly more than fifteen big & small forest regions numerous which should be used for development of the area and plantation of different medicinal plants as well as other economic plants. In addition to “Ho” tribe, others tribal people also used to ethnomedicinal practices for childbirth at West Singhbhum district is discussed. This may be an indication of a direct relationship between the chemicals present in the plant and its reported use for the ailments in the childbirth periods. There is a need for further investigations on these ethno medicinal plants. Efforts should be made for their conservation and their cultivation and encouraged to the local people for the conservation of these medicinal plants. The awareness programme also helpful for saving the plants. These medicinal plants are very inexpensive & no side effect for the usages. So, many tribal people as well as local people use these medicinal plants during childbirth period at West Singhbhum district. The botanical names (Latin), family and vernacular names and plant part used along with usage are enumerated.

**Keywords:** West Singhbhum, Ethno Medicinal Practices, Childbirth, Ho, Munda, Conservation, Inexpensive, Side Effect

## Introduction

The paper deals with the study of ethno medicinal plants used for childbirth by the “Ho” tribes of West Singhbhum district of Jharkhand. The objective of this study is to investigate and record the uses of plants by the tribes residing in the study site especially for childbirth. There are so many medicinal plants that use to treat during childbirth at different research areas at West Singhbhum district.<sup>1</sup> Vernacular names and method of application of plant/ plant parts for childbirth have been studied and recorded.

## Study Area And Climate

Singhbhum district came into existence when the old Singhbhum district bifurcated in 1990, with nine community development blocks. Eastern part became the East Singhbhum with Jamshedpur as its district Headquarter and with western part became West Singhbhum with Chaibasa as its Headquarter. In 2001, West Singhbhum again divided into two parts, with 8 blocks Seraikela-Kharsawan district came into existence and West Singhbhum remain with 15 blocks and two administrative Sub-divisions. At present West Singhbhum has 18 blocks and 3 Sub-divisions. The district is full of hills alternating with valleys, sleep mountains, deep forests on the mountain slopes and many small forests also. The district contains one of the best Sal forests and the SARANDA (seven hundred hills) forest area is known as World over.<sup>2-7</sup> There are two accounts relating to the origin of the name of the district. According to one the name Singhbhum, or the lands of “SINGHS” has been derived from the patronymic of the Singh Rajas of Porahat. The second account suggests that the name is account from of the Singh Bonga, the principal deity of tribal population of the district.<sup>8</sup>

West Singhbhum district extends from 21°58' & 23° 36' N Latitude 85° 0' & 86° 54' E Longitude with total area 5290.89 sq. km and the district is bounded on the North by the district of Khunti, on the East by Seraikella-Kharsawan district, on the South by Keonjhar, Mayurbhanj and Sundergarh districts of Odisha and on the West by the district of Simdega and Sundergarh (Odisha).<sup>4,5</sup> The major rivers are Koel, Karo-Koina, Sanjal, Roro, Deo and Baitarani. There are several water falls, marshy lands, swamps and forests which have a plenty of ethno medicinal plants. The district is situated at a height of 244 Meter above the sea level and has an area of 5290.89 Sq. Kilometers.<sup>5</sup>

According to the 2011 census, West Singhbhum district has a population of 15,02,338 roughly equal to the US state

of Hawaii.<sup>7-10</sup> The district has a population density of 209 inhabitants per square kilometer. Its population density is of 209 inhabitants per square kilometer.<sup>11-13</sup> Its population growth rate over the decade 2001-2011 was 21.69%.<sup>14</sup> Paschim Singhbhum has a sex ration of 1004 females for every 1000 males and literacy rate of 58.63%. 14.51% of the population lies in urban areas.<sup>15</sup> The schedule castes and schedule tribes collectively account for 71.1% (3.79% SC and 67.39% ST) of the district's total population.<sup>8</sup> The prominent communities in this group, in terms of the district's total population are Ho (51.52%), Munda (9.33%), Oraon (2.15%), Bhuiya (1.36%), Santhal (1.01%), Gond (0.91%), Ghasi (0.8%), Bhumij (0.71%), Pan (0.51%), Mahli (0.29%), Dhobi (0.25%), Dom (0.25%), Lohra (0.22%), Chamar/Muchi (0.19%) and Kora (0.13%).<sup>16</sup> Additionally, other notable communities include Kharia, Chik Baraik, Bhogla, Turi, Birhor, Kol, Harijan/Mehtar/Bhangi, Pasi, Savar and Lalbegi have populations ranging between one thousand to a hundred. There are nearly more than two hundred numerous marshy lands exist here which should be used for development of the area for planting the medicinal plants and conservation of medicinal plants.

Like other parts of West Singhbhum District, the climate of the Sanctuary/protected areas is characteristically monsoonal with rhythm of changing season. It changes with respect to the changing climatic elements, which effectively controls the biodiversity of the area. The climate of this area also helps to conserve the biodiversity. Annual temperature of the Sanctuary/protected areas/forests areas varies between 9.0° C (min) and 40.6°C (max).<sup>17</sup> Average annual rainfall remains around 1500 mm and about 70% rainfall occurs during June to September. The relative humidity varies between 65-- 85% and is lowest during the month of March.<sup>18</sup>

## Methodology

The information was collected in the course of ethno medicinal studies, conducted in West Singhbhum district. The usual, oral interviewers, discussion with the people were the bases of collection of data about the medicinal uses of these plants for child birth. The works of Chopra et al. (1969), Hains Floras (1930), Kirtika and Basu (1985) and Sarma (2002) were referred for taxonomic identification. All the identified plant species were kept at the University Department of Botany, Kolhan University, Chaibasa,<sup>19,20</sup> Jharkhand for future references and helping identification of these identified plant species to Post Graduate students.

## Enumeration

Table I. List of Medicinal Plants

Sl. No.	Botanical name of plant	Family	Common name of plant	Part used	Usage of medicinal plants
1.	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i> Linn.	Amaranthaceae	Chirchita	Root	Root paste used externally at naval portion of pregnant women for easy delivery.

2.	<i>Adhatoda vasica</i> Nees.	Acanthaceae	Vasak	Root	Root paste applied externally to naval portion of pregnant women for easy delivery.
3.	<i>Alternanthera sessilis</i> (L) R. Br. Ex. D.C.	Amaranthaceae	Gudari Sag	Leaf	Leaf paste eaten by the pregnant women for easy delivery
4.	<i>Amaranthus tricolor</i> L.	Amaranthaceae	Lal Bhaji Sag, Lal Sag	Root	Crushed mixture of its root and Areca catechu nut to be eaten by pregnant women for easy delivery.
5.	<i>Cissampelos pareira</i> Linn.	Menispermaceae	Patha, Raja Patha	Root	Root paste applied to naval portion of pregnant woman for easy and quick delivery. Also used against painful menstruation, menorrhagia emmenagogue, scabies and eruptions on the body.
6.	<i>Holarrhena antidysenterica</i> (Linn.) Wall.	Apocynaceae	Kurchi	Seed	Seed powder 2-3 spoonful for helps to pregnant women for easy delivery.
7.	<i>Mimusops elengi</i> Linn.	Sapotaceae	Bakula Molshree	Flower	Flower eaten for pregnant women for easy delivery. Bark is given for promoting fertility in women.
8.	<i>Nymphaea nouchali</i> (Burm.f)	Nymphaeaceae	Lal Shaluk	Rhizome	Rhizome eaten by pregnant women for easy delivery.

### Observation And Discussion

The information collected for the ethno medicinal plant have been arranged alphabetically (table 1) according to botanical name, local name, plant part used and the usage. From the above study it has been observed that the "Ho" tribes as well as local people also, uses these plants for the treatment of childbirth carryout at present period. But many of them not fully dependent to these medicinal plant species and Baidhyas who used these medicinal plants during childbirth.<sup>21</sup> There were 8 (eight) medicinal plants with six families studied (fig. 1, 2, 3, & 4). and find that at present period many of tribal people and local people not taken risk for child delivery at homes and at the time of delivery, they have carried their patients to hospital for childbirth. So, the tribal system of medicine is losing their support to the local people and tribal people also. There were no any highly knowledgeable Baidhyas and person who gives the herbal medicines during childbirth, so it is not recommended for use the herbal medicine during childbirth, because lake of suitable knowledge. There is a great need to give training and organizing different workshops of herbal medicines at this area in between Baidhyas and knowledgeable persons. There is also a great need to the plantation of herbal medicinal plants and conservation of these plants.



Figure 1. *Adhatoda vasica* Nees



Figure 2. *Achyranthes aspera* Linn



Figure 3. *Alternanthera sessilis* (L) R. Br. Ex. D.C



Figure 4. *Amaranthus tricolor* Linn

## Result

The present investigation reveals that the ethnomedicinal plants used by “Ho” tribes for child-birth in West Singhbhum District of Jharkhand is very useful for the inhabitants lives in the research areas. There are so many ethno medicinal plants, now a days used by tribal people during child-birth at home and these plants also supports to the nursing mother for their nutrient diets, vitamins, blood increasing and many medicines to treat different diseases. But due to anthropogenic activities, many of these medicinal plants are deterioration or extinct. However, we need to develop techniques to make rapid assessment of the status and movement of external factors that causes the loss of habitats.

West Singhbhum District of Jharkhand is one of the floristically richest in North East India and provides an excellent piece of rich biodiversity. The “Tribal” communities are dominant over other population. All tribal people have their own herbal health care system.<sup>22</sup> They fully dependent on the forest products for their food and shelter. The present work emphasized on medicinal utility of ever neglected many plants, which have no great ideas to the local people, but the tribal people and knowledgeable

people of that particular research areas have tremendous knowledge about these medicinal plants.<sup>23</sup> So, we can say that everything green is medicine, please protect them, plant them and conserve them. And finally, the conservation strategies are applied for protection of these essential ethno medicinal plants.

## Conclusion

Now it's concluded that all mentioned ethno medicinal plants are very useful for “Ho” tribe to use during child-birth. Now a days, there are not proper road and connectivity to reach different villages. During rainy season, all the areas changed into watery areas and so many difficulties arise of the people and this situation only the herbal medicine and local Baidhyas are the source to treat the disease persons. So, all mentioned ethno medicinal plants are the great source of medicine used by tribal people during child-birth.

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