



ISSN : 0973-7057

Ethnobotanical study of cosmetics used in Kosi area of Bihar

Shikha Choudhury^{a*} & Anjali Sharma^b

^{a*}Department of Botany, S.N.S.R.K.S College, Saharsa

^bFaculty, Department of Biotech, M.L.T. College, Saharsa

Received , 22nd November, 2014; Revised: 15th December, 2014

Abstract : In village area of Kosi division, women generally use different plants and plant parts for cosmetic purposes such as beautifying face, shining hairs, removing dandruff and shining skin. The most important plants used for these purposes are Aloe, Aegle, Neem, Amala, Bargad, Aadi etc.

Keywords: Cosmetics, Aloe, Aegle, Neem, Amla, Bargad

INTRODUCTION

Cosmetics are the preparation used to beautify skins and hairs. An ethno-cosmetic may be defined as beautifying agents used traditionally by the women. In Atharva Veda, it is mentioned that there are two groups of herbs, under the name “Sarupamkarni” used for beautification and “Keshviridhini” used to strengthen weakened hair or to make them long, lustrous and black (Sharma, 1969).

Description of Study Area

Kosi division is the north eastern part of Bihar is located at 25.93°N 86.25°E. It has an average elevation of 34 meters. This area is surrounded by Nepal in North, Khagaria in South, Purnea in East and Darbhanga in West. They are badly affected by Kosi River. The River passes through the Western side of the Kosi division. A large number of villages of this division lie within the embankment of Kosi River. No any proper communication is available for these villages. People of this area generally depend on herbs for treatment of different ailments. For the beautification women of this area uses different herbs. Plants like Mustard, Coconut, *Sesamum*, *Curcuma*, *Lawsonia*, *Eclipta*, *Eagle*, *Achyranthes*, *Aloe*, *Asparagus*, *Azadirachta* etc.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Frequent field tours were conducted within villages under embankment of Kosi River from July 2013 to June 2014. Plants used for cosmetic purposes were collected. Women of

this area were consulted and asked about the herbs which they used for beautification and hair care. They were also asked the process of use of the herbs. The collected plants were brought to the laboratory and identified with the help of standard monograph. Herbariums were prepared by drying the specimen in herbarium press, poisoning and pasting the plants on herbarium sheets.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The common plants used for the cosmetic purposes by the women of this area are *Curcuma longa*, *Eclipta prostrata*, *Phyllanthus emblica*, *Achyranthes aspera*, *Aegle marmelos*, *Azadirachta indica*, *Citrus medica*, *Ficus benghalensis*, *Ficus racemosa*, *Aloe barbendensis*, *Zingiber officinale* & *Asparagus racemosus*.

Curcuma longa Linn. – It belongs to family Zingiberaceae. Locally known as Haldi is one of the important cosmetic used by most of the women. The rhizome is made into a paste along with *Cicer arietinum* and mustard oil. This preparation is known as “Ubtan”. It is applied on face, hands and feet. It improves the lustre of skin. It specially used in winter season and during marriage ceremony.

Zingiber officinale Linn.- It belongs to family Zingiberaceae. Commonly known as “Adi” is used to promote hair growth. The rhizome is rubbed on the head.

Eclipta prostrata Linn. – It belongs to Asteraceae. Locally known as Bhingaraj. Its leaf juice used to blacken the hairs.

Phyllanthus emblica Linn.- It belongs to Euphorbiaceae. Locally known as “Amala” is most important medicinal plant, the fruit juice is used for darkening hairs.

*Corresponding author :

Phone: 09472492042

E-mail :

Achyranthes aspera Linn.- It belongs to Amrantaaceae. Locally known as “Ulta Chirchiri”. The moistened root is crushed and applied on scalp overnight to remove dandruff and promote healthy hair.

Azadirachta indica A. Juss.- It belongs to Meliaceae. Locally known as “Neem”. Fruit are used as hair shampoo for removing dandruff. Leaf juice is used in skin diseases.

Ficus benghalensis Linn.- It belongs to Moraceae. Locally known as “Bargad”. The prop-root is crushed and mix with cow dung. The paste is applied on hairs for promoting luxuriant hair growth.

Ficus racemosa Linn.- It belongs to Moraceae. Locally known as “Gular”. The yellow leaves are dried and powdered.

It is mixed in hair oil and massaged on scalp for preventing hair fall.

Aegle marmelos Linn.- It belongs to Rutaceae. Locally known as “Bel”. Fruit pulp is used as shampoo.

Citrus medica Linn.- It belongs to Rutaceae. Locally known as “Jhamari Nimboo”. Fruit juice is mixed with honey and applied on face for removing wrinkles.

Asparagus racemosus Willd.- It belongs to Liliaceae. Locally known as “Satawar”. Leaf and root juice is used for improving face complexion.

Aloe vera Linn.- It belongs to Liliaceae. Locally known as “Ghritkumari”. Leaf gel is applied on face to remove wrinkles.

Table No. 1: List of plants used in Cosmetics

SI. No.	Botanical Name	Local Name	Family	Part Used	Preparation	Purpose
1.	<i>Curcuma longa</i>	Haldi	Zingiberaceae	Rhizome	Paste of rhizome is mixed with besan and mustard oil	improve lustre of Skins
2.	<i>Zingiber officinale</i>	Aadi	Zingiberaceae	Rhizome	Rhizome juice is applied	Promote hair growth
3.	<i>Eclipta prostrata</i>	Bhringaraj	Asteraceae	Leaf	Leaf juice is applied	Hairs blackens
4.	<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i>	Amla	Euphorbiaceae	Fruit	Fruit juice is extracted	For darkening Hairs
5.	<i>Achyranthes aspera</i>	Ulta Chirchiri	Amaranthaceae	Root	Moistened roots are crushed and applied on scalp overnight	Removes dandruff
6.	<i>Azadirachta indica</i>	Neem	Meliaceae	Leaves & Fruits	Fruit are used as hair shampoo	Removes dandruff
7.	<i>Ficus benghalensis</i>	Bargad	Moraceae	Prop root	Prop root are crushed and mixed with cow-dung and made into a past	Luxuriant growth of hair
8.	<i>Ficus racemosa</i>	Gular	Moraceae	Leaves	Yellow leaves are dried and powdered and mixed in hair oil. Massaged on scalp	Prevents hair fall
9.	<i>Aegle marmelos</i>	Bel	Rutaceae	Fruit Pulp	Fruit pulp is applied as soap	Shining of hairs
10.	<i>Citrus medica</i>	Nimbu	Rutaceae	Juice	Fruit juice is mixed with honey and applied on face	Removes wrinkles
11.	<i>Asparagus racemosus</i>	Sataver	Liliaceae	Leaf Juice	Leaf juice is extracted and mixed with hair oil. Applied on scalp	Promote hair growth
12.	<i>Aloe vera</i>	Ghritku mari	Liliaceae	Leaf Juice	Leaf gel applied on face and head	Remove wrinkles and dandruff

REFERENCES

1. **Agharkar, S.P., 1991.** Medicinal plants of Bombay, Presidency (Sc. Publishers Jodhpur, India).
2. **Baidya Dinesh Chandra 2012.** Vanoshdhi Vigyan. Pub. Hindi Sewa Sadan, Halan Gunj, Muthura.
3. **Chopra, R.N., Nayar S.L. and Chopra, I.C. 1956.** Glossary of Indian Medicinal Plants, CSIR, New Delhi.
4. **Dr. Prakash Paranjpe 2001.** Indian Medicinal Plants for Gotten Healers. *A guide to Ayurvedic Herbal Medicine*. Pub. Chaukhamba Sanskrit Pratishthan, 38 U.A Bungalow Road, Delhi-110007.
5. **Jha, V. 2004.** Vetiver and ‘Sikki Art’ in the folk life of Rural India in the Mithila region, Bihar. *Veriverim* 20:2.
6. **Kakkar, M.L.** Ghar ka Vaidya. Pub. Lakshimi Prakashan, Delhi-6.
