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ETHNOMEDICINAL PLANTS FOR EASY DELIVERY USED BY THE PRIMITIVE AND VULNERABLE TRIBAL GROUPS (PVTGS) OF VISAKHAPATNAM DT. ANDHRA PRADESH

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ABSTRACT
The paper deals with 17 ethnomedicinal plant species as many as genera and families used for easy delivery of pregnant women prevalent among the Primitive and Vulnerable tribal groups of Visakhapatnam district. Grewia orientalis and 14 practices were found to be new or less known.
KEYWORDS: *Ethnomedicine, Easy delivery, PVTGs, Visakhapatnam*

STUDY AREA

Visakhapatnam district is situated in the north eastern part of Andhra Pradesh. It lies between 17° -34' 11" and 18° – 32' 57" in northern latitude and 81°1 -51' 49" and 83º-16' 9" in eastern longitude with a total area of 6,298 sq km covering 11 mandals of Visakhapatnam districts of Andhra Pradesh. Very few publications are available in India [6-9] and exclusive studies on the easy delivery were not available necessitating the present study.

Ethnology

Tribes in India have their own way of living within social and cultural moorings, purely governed on the basis of local conditions and ethos. The term "tribes was first included in the Government of India Act 1935. Article 342 of the Constitution of India defines 'tribes' as "an endogamous group with an ethnic identity; who have retained their traditional cultural identity; they have a distinct language or dialect of their own; they are economically backward and live in seclusion, governed by their own social norms and largely having a self-contained economy." The term 'Primitive tribes' was first used by western anthropologists to represent, "a primary aggregate of people living in a primitive or barbarous conditions under a headman or chief". In the study area *Gadaba, Khond* and *Porja* are the primitive and vulnerable tribal groups.

Gadaba

The Gadaba call themselves 'Mogililu' or 'Modililu' in their own dialect. The Gadaba were formerly employed as palanquin-bearers. They owe their name to the fact that its ancestors emigrated from the bank of the Gadabari (Godavari) river, and settled at Nandapur, the former capital of the Rajas of Jeypore. Sometimes it is to Kadava in Tamil, because of their prominent earrings, *kadu* in Tamil meaning ear. It may be more proper to derive it from the Sanskrit *gatvara*, which in Oriya means locomotive and palanquin-bearers may deserve the adjective '*gatvara*'. Another derivation may be from the Sanskrit *kadavada*, which means speaking indistinctly. As per 2001 census reports, the total population of the Gadaba was 36078 of which 17836 were men and 18242 women. The low literacy level (36.63%) indicates educational backwardness among the community. Gadaba belong to the Austro-Asiatic linguistic family. There are four major endogamous groups, each having its own recognition as a primitive tribal group by the government of India.

Kondh

The Kondh, are also called Kodulu, Samantha and Jatapu. They call themselves 'Kuvinga' in their 'Kui' dialect. The Kondhs are very primitive, inhabiting inaccessible hills and forests. As these people live in deep forests and on hills, they are called Kondulu". Kandha or Khondh are a Dravidian tribe in the hills of Orissa and neighbouring districts, commonly called Kondh. Since they mainly depend on '*podu*' cultivation, shifting from place to place for fresh *podu* fields, is ultimately led to their migration from Orissa to Andhra Pradesh. They live in the hills separating the districts of Ganjam and Vizagapatnam in the Madras Presidency and continuing northwards into the Orissa territory crossing the Mahanadi into Angul and the Khondmals. The population of the Kondh according to 2001 census is 85324 with a low literacy rate (17.81%). They speak '*Kui*' language among themselves and only men speak Telugu with other communities. The Kondh are nonvegetarian, who eat beef, pork and carrion. Males are addicted to liquor especially during hot weather, when the sago palm is in full flow. They also drink liquor and toddy available in the shandies and also homemade liquor. Women take alcoholic drinks occasionally. Smoking is very common. Women smoke only cigars. They chew betel and use snuff. Reverse smoking is a common habit.

Porja

The Porja are hill tribe, inhabiting the Agency Area of Visakhapatnam district, and spread over the adjoining areas of Orissa state. They are chiefly shifting agriculturists and cultivate lands on the high level hill slopes. A numerically small tribe with a population of 32669 (0.65%) and a literacy rate of 26.55%. They reside mainly in the Munchingput, Ananthagiri and Pedabayalu mandals. Their mother tongue is '*Parji*' dialect, a corrupt form of Oriya language. The term *Porja* seems to have been derived from Oriya words *po* and *raja* which mean 'so of

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a king'. Most of them have migrated from Orissa state about 300 years back to the present habitat in search of cultivable land. They are nonvegetarian. They drink home-made '*landa', ragi* liquor or *ippasara* and *caryota* palm sap. Both males and females smoke loose tobacco, cigar and ganja and also chew tobacco along with some local narcotics, namely, *ganja* and *nalla mandu* (opium).

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The ethnomedicinal data presented here are the outcome of a series of intensive field studies conducted during 2008-2011 in 95 interior tribal pockets with good forest cover and 165 *vaidyas* were consulted. Each field trip was of 5-8 days duration covering all seasons of a year. After establishing good rapport with the tribe, the utility of plants, detailed methods of uses were documented and cross-checked for authenticity. Plants are identified with floras [1-2]. Voucher specimens were prepared and deposited in the Herbarium of the Department of Botany, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam (AUV).

Enumeration

The plants are arranged in an alphabetical order with botanical name followed by family, vernacular name, English name, method, mode and duration of the treatment. Plants and practices marked with an asterisk (*) are considered to be new or less known.

Abrus precatorius L. (Fabaceae) Gurivinda, Guriginja, Crab's eye
* Bark paste mixed with 50 ml of water is given.

Achyranthes aspera L. (Amaranthaceae) Kukkurudhanthi, Prickly chaff flower
* Wear the root in the axil of the ear.

Argemone mexicana L. (Papaveraceae) Yerrikusuma, Mexican poppy
*Root paste along with root paste of *Andrographis paniculata* mixed with half tea glass of hot water is administered at the time labour pains.

Belamcanda chinensis Leman (Iridaceae) Kusudabbareku, Block lily, Leopard lily
*Leaves are kept in the axil of ear at the time of labour pains.

Cassia tora L. **(**Caesalpiniaceae) Tantepu mokka,Foetid cassia
* Roots are crushed and kept near the vagina.

Crinum asiaticum L. (Amaryllidaceae) Jamirica kalabanda, Poison bulb
*Fifty g of leaf paste mixed with half tea glass of water is administered at the time of delivery. ***Ficus racemosa*** L. (Moraceae) Medi chettu, Cluster fig
*Root paste is applied beneath the feet.

Gloriosa superba L. (Liliaceae) Vanka vajram. Superb lily
Tuber paste is applied under the foot, palms and navel.

Grewia orientalis L. (Tiliaceae) Chilakam pothadi
Root paste or flower paste is administered at the time of delivery.

Kalanchoe pinnata (Lam.) Pers. **(**Crassulaceae) Disthi mandhu,
A piece of leaf is eaten at the time of delivery.

Catunaregam spinosa (Thunb.) Tirv. (Rubiaceae) Manga chettu, Emetic nut
*Dried unripe fruits are burnt on the fire and smoke is exposed to vagina.

Oroxylum indicum (L.) Vent. (Bignoniaceae) Bapana, Pumpena, Indian trumpet-flower
*Bark paste mixed with half tea glass of hot water is given at the time of delivery.

Rauvolfia serpentina (L.) Benth. ex Kurz. (Apocynaceae) Pathala garidi, Sarpentina root
*One spoon of tuber decoction is given orally during delivery.

Sterculia urens Roxb. (Sterculiaceae) Kovila chettu, Gum karaya
*Stem bark with that of *Madhuca longifolia* is made into powder. One to two spoons of it is taken with one cup of water.

Trichodesma indicum (L.) R. Br. (Boraginaceae) Nosanugu
*Tribals uproot the whole plant at the time of delivery. If uprooted smoothly without any hindrance it is an omen for easy delivery. If it is uprooted hardly it is considered as bad omen indicating delayed delivery. Crushed root juice is administered orally for easy delivery.

Yucca gloriosa L. (Liliaceae) Osso, Spanish dagger
*Leaf top is kept either in the axil of the ear or in the plait at the time of delivery.

Zizyphus oenoplia (L.) Mill. **(**Rhamnaceae) Rubba chettu, Jackal jujule.
A piece of root is collected from the East facing side of the plant and keeps it in the hair of the woman at time of delivery. Then it relieves from pain.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The paper deals with 17 ethnomedicinal plants species as many as genera and families used by the Primitive and Vulnerable tribal groups of Visakhapatnam district for easy delivery. Habit-wise analysis showed the dominance of herbs represented with 9 species followed by trees with 6 species and climbers and shrubs each I species. Morphological analysis showed the root in 6 practices followed by leaf (4), stem bark (3), tuber (2), fruit and whole plant each one practice. *Grewia orientalis* and 14 practices were found to be new or less known [4-5]. The study is great importance to preserve the knowledge of medicinal plants for easy delivery by the primitive and vulnerable tribal groups of Visakhapatnam district, Andhra Pradesh.

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