

Studies on Traditional Values of Ocimum in the Selected Study Sites of Neyyattinkara Taluk in Trivandrum District

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ABSTRACT

Ocimum, commonly known as Tulsi or holy basil, has been revered for centuries in traditional medicine, spirituality, and culture. This review aims to explore the traditional values of Ocimum, highlighting its medicinal, spiritual, and cultural significance. The plant has been used in Ayurvedic and Unani medicine for its adaptogenic, anti-inflammatory, and antimicrobial properties, treating various ailments, including respiratory, gastrointestinal, and skin disorders. In Hinduism, Ocimum is considered a sacred plant, associated with the goddess Tulsi, and is used in worship, rituals, and as a symbol of spiritual growth. The plant also holds cultural significance, featuring in traditional Indian and Southeast Asian cuisine, festivals, and folklore. This review highlights the importance of Ocimum in traditional societies, emphasizing its potential for modern applications in medicine, wellness, and sustainability.

Introduction:

Methodical exploration in various system of Indian drug under the patronage of the Government of Indian commenced in the time 1969 with the established of the Central Council for Research in Indian



Medicine and Homeopathy (CCRIMH). In 1978, this body was resolved into four separate exploration councils one each for Ayurveda and Siddha, Unani drug, Homeopathy, and Yoga and Neurology. According to Confidante and Jain (1998) many plants are especially cultivated for their medicinal value and numerous other useful species are set up growing near townlets. The roots, dinghy, leaves, fruits etc. are taken from the plants of the needed species of course some taboos and traditional practices like restriction of collection of medicinal sauces are in actuality. The *Ocimum* is an aromatic imperishable plant in the family Lamiaceae. The plant also grows wild in different tropical and subtropical regions, but the civilization persists due to its uses in oil birth and medication of remedies, the factory is also used in Thain cuisine and is ascertained to as Thai holy basil (Kaphrao). The Tulsi plant is considered substantially for religious and medicinal purposes in India. Tulsi factory is grown in nearly every Indian ménage for the purpose of religious deification, but the marketable product of Tulsi finds its operation in the manufacture of sweet substances and essential canvases. These days basil or Tulsi is being cultivated considerably in France, Hungary, Indonesian, Morocco, Greece, Israel and the United States. The factory has a standing structure and is short lived. The factory is bushy in nature and grows to a height of 50 cm. The stem of the factory is herbaceous when youthful. The leaves of the Tulsi plants are broad, round-shaped and 5- 8 cm long. Different types of this plants have different leaves colour ranging from unheroic-green to bright green or red colour. The leaves are moreover silky and candescent or dull and crinkly. The Tulsi plant bears small white- or grandiloquent- coloured flowers arranged in curls at the ends of branches. These flowers appear substantially in the summer season. The flowers on the plant produce seeds, which are tone- sowing in nature and germinate veritably fluently as there's no dormancy conditions. The colour of the seeds is brown or black. The essential corridor of the plants are the leaves, stem and flowering covers. The Tulsi plant is said to be a sacred condiment in all of India. *Ocimum sanctum L.*, *Ocimum basilicum L.*, *Ocimum gratissimum L.*, *Ocimum kilimandscharicum Gurke.*, *Ocimum americanum L.* are exemplifications of known from as early as the vedic period and is held sacred by the Hindus and is frequently planted around the temples and used in rosaries. Traditionally, in India, Tulsi is planted in the centre of the central yard of Hindu houses. Numerous Hindus have Tulsi plants, growing in front of or near their home, normally in special pots or a special masonry construction known as “Tulsi Vrindavan”. The Tulsi is cultivated for spiritual and therapeutic purpose; and for its essential oil (EO).

TULSI MANTHRA: -

“Prasheetha Tulsi Devi Prasheetha harii vallabhe Ksheerodha
madanodhbhootho Tulsi thvom namamyaham”.

**MONOGRAPH OF OCIMUM: -**

Bengali name: Tulsi

English name: Holy basil

Scientific name: *Ocimum santum* L.

Family: Lamiaceae

Duration : Perennial

MATERIALS & METHODS

Thiruvananthapuram district is divided into six Taluks: Thiruvananthapuram, Chirayinkeezhu, Neyyattinkara, Nedumangadu, Varkala, and Kattakada. The urban bodies in the district are the Thiruvananthapuram corporation, and the Varkala, Neyyattinkara, Attingal and Nedumangadu cosmopolises. The district covers an area of 2192 square kilometres (541 655 acres). Thiruvananthapuram district is located between 8.54 °N 77.17°N. In this present study, five study sites were selected from the Neyyattinkara taluk of Trivandrum district. The study sites were selected on the basis of good diversity of *Ocimum* plants, number of traditional healers, good number of people having the traditional beliefs and constructed Vrindavan in their houses.

Study sites

_ Veliyamcode

_ Palottuvila

_ Parakkonam

_ Unduvetti

_ Maranalloor

· VELIYAMCODE

Veliyamcode is a village having good diversity of medicinal plants comes under the taluk Neyyattinkara. Approximately, hundred houses and nearly about 500 peoples are living there. It is one among the rural area. The famous Siddha practitioner Mr. Parasu Nadar Siddha clinic is situated in this village. There are 5 Siddha clinic found in this village. Siddha practitioners prepare the medicine in their houses and made treatment in their own house.



· PALOTTUVILA

Palottuvila is a remote village in Neyyattinkara taluk of Trivandrum district. We can't see any Allopathic hospitals in this village. But there are 15 Siddha clinic and 5 small Ayurvedhic centres are found in this village. Dr. Suresh kumar's Siddha clinic is one among them. Patients from town areas of Trivandrum district are also come under there for Siddha treatment. Nearly, 950 people are living in this area.

· PARAKKONAM

Parakkonam is a rural village of Neyyattinkara taluk. The houses are situated near by nearby. Nearly 400 peoples and 100 houses are there. More than 10 siddha practitioners are there. Most of the houses, we can see the Vrindavan. The researcher interviewed Mr. Nelson siddha practitioner from this study site.

· UNDUVETTI

Unduvetti is comes under the taluk Neyyattinkara. Unduvetti is famous in Unduvetti Devi temple. Many Hindu believers are living there. Researcher can see many Ocimum plants around the temple. Unduvetti peoples considerd as the Tulsi plant is the God's plant. God Krishnan is a Tulsi lover. In Unduvetti temple, the belivers ornamented their Devi by using Ocimum garland. Nearly, 8 Siddha practitioners, nearly 450 peoples and above 75 houses are there. Only one primary health centre is found in this village for Allopathic treatment.

· MARANALLOOR

It is an urban area comes under the taluk Neyyattinkara. More than 2 Ayurvedic dispensaries and nearly 15 siddha practitioners are there. But two Allopathic hospitals are found in this village. Approximately, 750 houses and more than 1500 peoples are there. Maranalloor is famous in Ayurvedic doctor Mr. Pathmanabhan.

Identification of variants ocimum

Frequent calls were made to all the named study spots and identify the different species and kinds of Tulsi with the help of the traditional religionists in all the named townlets. They are verified by pertaining the book "Tribal medicine" (Pal & Jain 1998). "Flora of the presidency of Madras" (Gamble



1957) and “Flora of Tamil Nadu” (Hendry, Kumari and Chitra, 1987) were appertained to find out the scientific names are linked.

Sacred beliefs of Ocimum.

In all the study spots, temples were visited. The poojari who perform the pooja and perching were canvassed with set questions connected with the sacred belief of the Tulsi and the relations were recorded. The immolation worships were attended to find out what are the plants are offer to God and which plant is specified for colorful rituals and specific days of deification. Traditional religionists from all the study spots were set up out and their views regarding the sacred beliefs were also recorded.

Medicinal values of ocimum

The houses which having the Vrindavan were visited in all the study spots named for the study. The women who have practices walking around the Vrindavan were canvassed to know the factual value of the Vrindavan. The houses which having the practice of using Tulsi water. Identified Ocimum plants were taken to the traditional Siddha interpreters to find out the medicinal value of the plants, corridor which is used as drug, the system of medication of drug and days taken for healing colorful conditions. The data collected were cross checked through wordbook of Indian folk medicine and Ethnobotany (Jain 1994).

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

In this study there are five species of Ocimum identified from the selected study sites which are used to cure the diseases of human beings.

Sacred beliefs

Ocimum in the most sacred plant is appertained as holy basil in the Hindu Holy Writ. God has bestowed specific powers to the holy basil which play important part in the health care system and substance of mortal life. In the present study numerous traditional religionists, poojaris, myths, traditional siddha interpreters and aged people who have the knowledge about the sacred values of shops were canvassed by commerce, the experimenter observed numerous sacred beliefs about the holy basil (Ocimum plant).

Tulsitheertham (Holy water)

Tulsitheertham by putting *Ocimum* leaves and flowers in the pure water. They are always drinking this blessed water. This study also found that the traditional Hindu people particularly Brahmin



and Nayar community put some Tulsi leaves in the water that they use for bathing and cleaning hands. They always placed a bucket of water with some *Ocimum* leaves in the entrance of the house, whenever they enter the house, they clean their hands and legs with this water. (Ramesh and Satakopan 2010) reported that holy basil contains compounds with antiseptic activity that would help to kill to microorganisms. The scent from the plant also deters insects. Thus, flies including mosquitoes which can spread diseases like malaria would be deterred from landing on people when they bath in holy basil water. The dried leaves are assorted with stockpiled grains to resist pests.

Wearing Tulsi leaves in the ear and hair

This study observed that the traditional Hindu men used to wear the youthful leaves of *Ocimum* on reverse of the cognizance and the women wear the youthful leaves on the head after bathing. They believed that the sweet power of *Ocimum* enters in to the body through the cognizance and can save them from numerous conditions. Subramanian (2012) states that cognizance are the most sensitive and absorptive part of the mortal body so while wearing the leaves of *Ocimum* on the observance, the medicinal scent can fluently enter in to the body.

OCIMUM IN HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

Ocimum plant is used to cure a number of mortal conditions and used as a health supporter. In the present study some traditional siddha interpreters were canvassed to know the factual curing capacity of Tulsi and the Ayurvedic conformations for some conditions. This study also confirms the curability by asking the cases who are witnessing treatment in the said Siddha hospitals.

***DIABETICS**

Parasu Nadar, who was canvassed for this study states that the persons who have diabetic complaint is advised to take the excerpt prepared by using the youthful leaves and flowers of *Ocimum* and *Vilvum* in the early morning before taking food. If one takes this regularly it would balance the blood sugar and they can live happily without this problem till the end of their life.

***FEVER**

This study observed that the fresh juice of Tulsi taken with black pepper powder cures interrupted complications. In case of acute complications, a decoction of the leaves boiled with pulverized Cardamom in half a liter of water and mixed with sugar and milk brings down the temperature. Prakash and Gupta (2002) reported that due to peculiar substance of *Ocimum sanctum* L. Oil is used to clear the



mind and relieve the intellectual fatigue, while giving clarity and internal strength. The Ocimum oil is also administered for Asthma, bronchitis, sinus infection, constipation, nausea.

***CARDIAC PROBLEMS**

Nearly all the siddha interpreters and traditional religionists who were canvassed for this study state that the regular operation of Tulsi alcohol prevents heart attacks. It can lower stress related high blood pressure and normalizes blood pressure. It protects the heart and blood vessels, promotes the blood rotation and lowers the dangerous cholesterol. This study also set up that indeed, Allopathic croakers recommend taking Tulsi tea which provides warming benefits for the heart and help cardiac threat.

***DIGESTIVE PROBLEM**

The present study observed that the Tulsi excerpt is used to treat stomach problems like indigestion, intestinal gas, intestinal worms, dysentery and ulcer and that it can induces the appetite. Raju is a traditional siddha guru who was canvassed for this study told that Tulsi is a way of worms and spongers. He also reported that Tulsi and Ginger added with tea is used for the treatment of indigestion and the seeds of Tulsi soaked in water is used to prepare a pudding which is used in the treatment of dysentery.

*** USED FOR CURING TOOTH DISORDER**

The Tulsi has veritably important benefits for curing the in- tooth diseases. The leaves need to be dried in the sun and are small grained, are used for brushing teeth. It may be mixed with mustard oil painting to form a paste.

*** SKIN OINTMENTS**

Tulsi is a component in skin ointments. The youthful leaves of *Ocimum sanctum* L. and the leaves of *Tylophora indica* are pasted using coconut oil painting. This paste prevents itching, pustules.

*** KIDNEY STONE**

Jayakumar, the traditional siddha practitioner informed that the persons who are affected with order monuments, when regularly taking an admixture of basil leaves juice and honey for 6 months helps expel the monuments via the urinary tract.



FIGURES

Vrindavan constructed in front of a house of a traditional believer



A traditional believer going around the Vrindavan



List of Ocimum plants

- (a) *Ocimum sanctum* L. (b) *Ocimum basilicum* L. (c) *Ocimum americanum* L. (d) *Ocimum kilimandscharicum* Gurke. (e) *Ocimum gratissimum* L

(a)



(b)



(c)





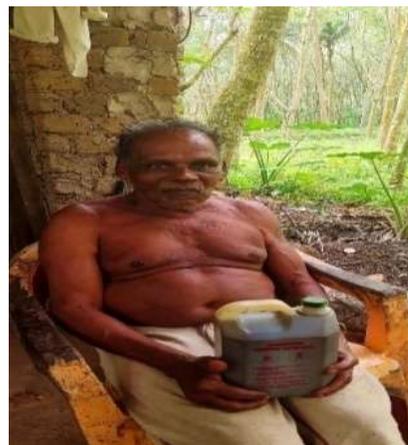
(d)



(e)



Researcher interviewing traditional siddha practitioners



CONCLUSION

The legend “old is gold” is more applicable in the present environment. The future of any nation depends on its knowledge bank and coffers. Our ancestors had left colorful religious beliefs for us towards nature and it was a veritably formative device for conservation of factory biodiversity not only during their time but it present also our fathers have attached a religious belief or solemnities as part of ritual to utmost of



the shops, which in fact proved further than functional. All most all the shops which are declared as holy shops by our fathers have medicinal value and utmost of them are in the verge of extermination. Thus, the main reason for associating shops with religious solemnities and beliefs was presumably for conservation or we can say that it was the retired conception of conservation of factory biodiversity. Ocimum is one among the sacred factory and wood be ranked first in the sacred beliefs. This plant has a lot of medicinal goods and which is a part of utmost of the Ayurvedic expression prepared by the Siddha interpreters.

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