



COMMON FOLK PROVERBS IN RELATION TO ENVIRONMENT AND PLANTS IN RAJASTHAN, INDIA.

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Folk proverbs having reference to plants are indicative of the deep insight, common sense and practical wisdom of the common folk. The wild plants in Indian Folklore play important role in various activities of tribal people.

The present paper examines 14 proverbs commonly used by the tribals of Rajasthan, 48 proverbs including single plant species, 16 proverbs including two plant species and 6 proverbs including three or more plant species.

Keywords: Folk Proverbs, Environment, Plants, Rajasthan, India

A large number of Indian proverbs are very much reflected in various literary creations, especially in modern Indian poetry. Indeed, it is mostly expressed in a style of poetic narration called 'Lokaabharan'. Folk songs, folk tales and folk proverbs depict the love Indian people have for mother nature. : Central message of a proverb is often conveyed with a subtle touch of poetic imagination in a different linguistic device.

In view of present scenario of climatic change the proverbs are required to be reexamined. Simple formulations of the wisdom inherited from generation to generation by the tribal community. It is quite interesting that the tribals under the nature's umbrella have shared their lives with the flora and fauna available in their surroundings. Due to this they have drawn several examples and analogies to animate their folk sayings and proverbs. The more meaningful and lucid these orally bequeathed treasures become to those who have inherited them. In ancient India several folk proverbs were created by famous folk persons, Ghagh and Bhaddari. It is supposed that they lived between 2 -4 century AD. They closely observed nature and its components consistently and critically besides studying the behavioural pattern of plants, animals and forests with reference to changing pattern of clouds, winds, rains and also the planetary positions (Jain 1996).

Plants have found place in the proverbs of tribals of Rajasthan for indicating plant-animal associations, utility, fortune, advice to do or not to do and for

demarcating the regions, as weather indicator etc (Kachhawa 1995). Bhil(1954) and Joshi (1978) have recorded about 800 proverbs which are common among Bhil tribe in Rajasthan. The present paper deals with some important and common folk proverbs related with plants and environment of Rajasthan, India.

METHODOLOGY

Information was collected by interviewing local villagers and tribal people of some villages. The information was usually imparted in the local dialect and vernacular names of plants were recorded .

RESULTS

Some of the proverbs collected from the area are described in Tables 1, 2 and 3.

DISCUSSION

In India folk music, folk songs and proverbs have always played an important role in combating destructive elements and in harmonizing emotional outbursts relating to caste, creed, religion and language issues. Several folk forms of entertainment prevalent in different parts of India were powerful media of public instruction and unifying force for emotional integrity. Various organizations, movements and government bodies can effectively make use of these folk arts for developmental activities.

Kachhawa(1995), Bhil(1954) and Joshi (1978) have recorded about 800 proverbs of the Bhil tribe in Ra-

Table 1. Common proverbs : related with forest and trees

Forest	<i>Un ka dajya vun me, ur vun me lagi lai'</i> On not getting anything to eat at home, went to the forest and there also the forest was on fire
Forest	<i>'Guna ho to jungal bhalo ur augunno manakh khot'</i> The woods full of virtues are good, but an evil person though being a man is bad.
Tree	<i>'Mankhna maya ur rookhna chhaya'</i> Shadow remain till a tree stands, prosperity remains till a good man lives.
Climbers:	<i>'Kadi bel ke kada hi ful lage'</i> When the vine is bitter, how can the fruit be sweet.
Leaf	<i>"Hukam bina panda hi kaun hale.'</i> Without God's wish even a leaf cannot quiver.
Flower	<i>'Pel manganni sung ghani'</i> The first seeker gets the best things as the fragrance from a flower.
Branch	<i>'Mor ko baithbo ur dal ko tootbo'</i> By coincidence the branch on which a peacock alights breaks.
Fruits	<i>'Rut aayna fal pake'</i> Fruits appear in appropriate seasons only there is a time for things to happen.
Fencing	<i>'Jabta bina khet aur salla bina sasro chokho nahi lage'</i> Without protective measures (i.e. proper fencing) a field and a sasra (in-law's home) without sala (brother-in-law) do not look nice.
Fencing	<i>'Khet ke nipaj to baad hi bata de.'</i> By looking at the fencing one can have an estimation of the crop. Better the fencing, the more valuable the crop.
Sticks	<i>'Ekli lakdi na hi bale ur nahi ujalo hoy'</i> A single stick cannot burn continuously or give light. This can happen only when many of them are used together.

jasthan Some of the proverbs are invented on plants in general, some involve single species (Table 2) or two species (Table 3) and rest three or more species. Joshi (1995) have recorded about 125 proverbs used among different tribes of Rajasthan which are based on about equal number of plant species.

India's roles in identifying folklore for communication purposes have been quite positive. This experience can certainly be of some use to both the developing and underdeveloped countries if proper assessment of these efforts becomes available through scientific surveys.

Folk proverbs are most effective in changing the unscientific attitudes, superstitions, etc. inherited as a

part of tradition by the people in rural areas. In the course of folk performance, they transmit information and project ideas that may influence attitudes and behaviour as well as entertainment. Thus it is a great revelation nowadays that the folk arts are quite sufficient, as a medium to inform and disseminate people to safeguard against superstition and other such beliefs. Each folk art itself is a medium of communication because it is directly linked with the psyche of its audience. It is flexible and it can be modified in regard to its functional relevance to the society to which it belongs. That is perhaps why it survived.

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Table 2 . Proverbs involving single plant species

Name of Plant	Proverb
<i>Allium cepa</i> (Kanda)	'Kanda ka chuntara utarbo theek koni hai' If one starts peeling off, there will be nothing left. One must not try to expose others as generally all have faults.
<i>Allium cepa</i> (Kanda)	'Munn munn ka kanda ur kann kann ko sag.' Even cooking a large quantity of Kanda a small amount of vegetable is produced.
<i>Azadirachta indica</i> (Neema)	'Jyna ka paddya sabhav, Ka jasi jeev snu, Neem na meetha hoy, ka seencho ghee snu.' Pouring ghee on the roots of neem (<i>Azadirachta indica</i>) tree cannot turn it sweet. One can't change ones inherent qualities inspite of best efforts
<i>Azadirachta indica</i> (Neem)	'Dantali snu neem ni kate' A tree like neem can't be cut by a sickle which is meant for cutting grass and crops. For bigger jobs bigger means are needed.
<i>Azadirachta indica</i> (Neem)	'Neemda ko keedo neemda ma raji' The worm of neemda (<i>Azadirachta indica</i>) is happy in its tree only. One is happy in ones own environment : may be good or bad.
<i>Azadirachta indica</i> (Neem)	'Garib ka ghar neemdo lagyo jyo chandani me he ooth ooth chhaya me bethe' When a neem grew in a poor man's home he got up even at night and sat under its 'Shade' in moon light repeatedly.
<i>Balanites aegyptiaca</i> (Hingoto)	'Hingoto hi meetho hoto to gwalya hi nahi chhodata.' Useless persons are ignored in the society like the fruits of hingota which are not sweet.
<i>Boswellia serrata</i> (Salar)	'Salar mein jyada fal away to naj pake'. The greater the number of fruits on salar tree the greater the grain ripening in future.
<i>Brassica juncea</i> (Rai)	'Rai ka bhav ratou hi gya' To make feel the people ashamed for their act creating harm to others as a merchant. 'Rai ode prabat hai'. Behind the rai is a mountain. A big secret hidden. 'Rai ko pahaad ban gyo'. To make a big issue of a very small issue just like making mountain of Rai'.
<i>Calotropis procera</i> (Aakdo)	'Aakda ko keedo aakda snu raji'. Parasitic form of aakda is happy in toxic environment like a bad person happy in bad environment.
<i>Cannabis sativa</i> (Bhang)	'Bhang pibo soro lerna lebo doru' To drink bhang (leaves of <i>Cannabis sativa</i>) is easy but to cope up with its intoxicating effect very difficult. To do something bad is easy but bearing the consequences is difficult. 'Kunwa mein hi bhang padagi'. Corruption every where like spoiling the whole water of the well by mixing bhang in it.
<i>Cicer arietinum</i> (Channa)	'Ekla channa snu bhad koni fute' A single grain of gram cannot break the furnace. A single person alone cannot do a great job.
<i>Citrullus lanatus</i> (Matiro)	'Bakara ka moonda me matiro kunn rakhe'. A matiro(<i>Citrullus lanatus</i>) cannot be placed in the mouth of a goat. One cannot go beyond one's means.
<i>Cucumis melo</i> (Kharboojoo)	'Chahe Kharboojoo na chakku par patko aur chahe chakku na kharboojoo par kati to kharboojoo hi'. In the clash between the weak and the strong only the weak are hurt like when a knife and a kharboojoo (<i>Cucumis melo</i>) are taken into consideration it is obvious that the kharboojoo only is cut.
<i>Cucumis melo</i> var. <i>utilissimus</i> (Kakdi)	'Kakdyan ka chor ne to mukya snu hi maro' A punishment should be given according the crime, as a kakdi thief ought to be punished by blows only. 'Kako kiya snu kakdi kunn deve' Just by addressing someone as uncle how can kakdi fruits be obtained, merely by flattery one cannot gain ones ends as the other is not going to forget his sel finterest by this.
<i>Cyamopsis tetragonoloba</i> (Gwar)	'Kheti gori gwar ki, dhanni dholi gay'. The gwar crop is good, as not much labour and investment is required so it is a white cow.

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<i>Dendrocalamus strictus</i> (Bans)	<i>'Bans pola ur manakh gola ke kai nage pade'</i> . Bans is hollow from inside but on seeing it from outside it is not evident. How can a crook be recognized on his external appearance.
<i>Diospyros melanoxylon</i> (Tendu)	<i>'Tendu me jyada fal awe to akal pade'</i> When plentiful fruits are seen in tendu a famine is likely to follow.
<i>Ficus benghalensis</i> (Bad)	<i>'Modya ko bad vaso'</i> . A quarrelsome person or a crook rests below bad tree, as in the village nobody would like to allow him to stay with them.
<i>Ficus religiosa</i> (Peepal)	<i>'Ghar me byah hai aur beenani peepala beene'</i> . Important works should be handled earlier. There is marriage at home and daughter in-law is collecting peepal leaves. <i>'Goyara ke poonchade peepal doobe'</i> . When raining, lightning as believed by the tribals often falls on the tail of a Goyara (Indian monitor lizard) because of which peepal, the tree on which it runs is burnt to ashes. A good person giving shelter to an evil one is trapped along.
<i>Lagenaria siceraria</i> (Tumba)	<i>'Sadua ki raad mein tumba ko dher'</i> . When sadhus fight among themselves they will fight with Kamandals (Tumba). Hence any article may serve the purpose at the time of necessity. <i>'Kadi bel ka kada hi tumba'</i> . Bad man have bad offsprings like bitter climber of tumba will have bitter fruit.
<i>Momordica charantia</i> 'Krela'	<i>'Kada karela'</i> A bad is like fruit of karela which have bitter taste.
<i>Moringa olifera</i> (Sannno)	<i>'Ati' ko phulyon sannno, dal pat snu jaye.'</i> As sannana tree after profuse flowering loses its leaves and twigs, a person who indulges in excess of any thing, is destroyed.
<i>Nerium indicum</i> (Kaner)	<i>'Kaner ka fool ke to shivji ke chade, ke rody me pade'</i> . The fat of a patient is like flowers of kaner which are either offered to : Lord Shiv or thrown on waste ground.
<i>Phoenix sylvestris</i> (Khajoor)	<i>'Akash ko Patkyo, Khajoor mein atkyo.'</i> Fallen from the sky entangled in Khajoor, escaping from one problem and getting into another.
<i>Phyllanthus emblica</i> (Anwala)	<i>'Anwala meetha hota to guawalya hi koni chhodata'</i> . If the anwala fruits would have been sweet, the shepherds would not have left them. <i>'Anwala aali Rat'</i> Sudden change of any things is compared with fruits of anwala which are believed to come out in a single night.
<i>Sesamum indicum</i> (Till)	<i>'aa tilla me tel koni'</i> Inspite of the utmost labour little gain is expected i.e. there's no oil in these till. <i>'Rat andheri aur till kala.'</i> The coincidence of two misfortunes coming at same time causing suffering like it is impossible to clean the black till during dark night.
<i>Sterculia urens</i> (Kadai)	<i>'Kadai' me mor ur patta saath saath deekh to men jyada awaye.'</i> When the inflorescence and leaves on the kadai tree are seen together as an uncommon feature throughout the forest is assumed that the on coming weather will fetch plentiful rains.
<i>Tamarindus indica</i> (Aamli)	<i>'Aamli me lamba lamba phul lage to jyada meh aawey.'</i> When the fruits in aamli appear longer than usual it is a signal for good rain.
<i>Vigna radiate</i> (Moong)	<i>'Chhati par moong dalbo'</i> . To give immense sufferings to some one.
<i>Zingiber officinale</i> (Soonth)	<i>'Oondari ne soonth ko ganthyo ladgyo jyo pansarann bann baiti.'</i> The mice on getting a small piece of soonth (dry zingiber) has become a grocer. <i>'Bandro ke jane adrak ko swad'</i> . Some people do not understand the importance of certain things like a monkey does not know the taste of zingiber (adarak).
<i>Zizyphus nummularia</i> (Bordi)	<i>'Bai ka bor bees sair ka'</i> Unrequired things have little value like the bor fruits are sold at the cost of twenty sair (Unit of old weight in India) a rupee

Table 3. Proverbs : comprising two plant species

<i>Acacia catechu</i> and <i>Anogeissus pendula</i>	' <i>Kher ur dhokdo aaloi balle ur sukhoi balle</i> '. Some people are good at all times like the wood of kher and dhokra which burns easily whether it is green or dry.
<i>Allium cepa</i> (Kanda) and <i>Cucumis melo</i> (Kharboojo)	' <i>Bhali kahe jyo bhalo adami, buri kahe jyo bavlo, ek dolli neepji kando aur kharboojo</i> '. Good man with goodness and the bad with evil stay together preserving their qualities like two unlike plants Kharbooja and Kanda which may grow in the same bed.
<i>Calotropis procera</i> (Aak) and <i>Mangifera indica</i> (aam)	' <i>Aakda me aam neepje</i> '. When an able son is born in a bad family it is like growth of mango on aak plant.
<i>Cannabis sativa</i> (Bhang) and <i>Ocimum basilicum</i> (Tulsi)	' <i>Tulsa me bhang ko god</i> '. Growing bhang near holy basil is not appropriate, like good and bad persons should be kept away.
<i>Citrus limon</i> (Nimbu) and <i>Mangifera indica</i> (Aam)	' <i>Aam nimbu banniyo, galo bhinchya ras deve</i> '. Like aam and Nimbu a banniya (grocer) gives money only on squeezing his neck.
<i>Cordia dichotoma</i> (Lesva) and <i>Cordia gharaf</i> (Gundi)	' <i>Karam futya re kesva, gundi ke lagya laswa</i> '. When fortune frowns the unprecedented may happen like a tree of gundi bear fruits of leswa.
<i>Cucumis melo</i> var. <i>agrestis</i> (Kachara) and <i>Zizyphus nummularia</i> (Bor)	' <i>Kal ka kachara aur sukal ka bor</i> '. Abundance of kachara indicates famine and of bor indicates good weather.
<i>Mangifera indica</i> (Aam) and <i>Ricinus communis</i> (Erant)	' <i>Aam Pakya niche lulle erant unhco jay</i> '. A good man turns humble like mango fruits after becoming prosperous, however a bad man becomes proudy like the fruits of errant.
<i>Mangifera indica</i> (aam) and <i>Tamarindus indica</i> (Amli)	' <i>Aama ki bhokh amlyan snu Koni jave</i> '. The desire of a good thing cannot be satisfied by an inferior thing like a person desirous of eating aam fruits be appeased by giving amli.
<i>Oryza sativa</i> (Chawal) and <i>Vigna radiata</i> (Moong)	' <i>Moong snu peli chawal seeje</i> '. The weak are destroyed earlier in a calamity faced together with the strong, like in preparation of 'Khichri' chawal are cooked earlier than the moonga.

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