



CHANGES IN TRADITIONAL HEALTHCARE BEHAVIOR AMONG TRIBES OF ANUPPUR DISTRICT M.P.

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ABSTRACT:

Good human health consider as absence of any kind of illness and disease in body. But unfortunately sometimes human health condition suffers from different kind of illness and disease. This health condition is associated with physical, mental and spiritual in nature. These changes in health condition due to changes in Food habit, environmental condition. Tribal peoples (Baiga and Gond) strongly belief that in such condition religion plays important role in controlling and maintaining good human health. For the preventions and cure of illness and disease, various kind of activities perform like Magico-religious totem, ritualistic practices and worship of God-Goddess play important role maintaining good health for tribal peoples. The purpose of this article is to delineate a basic conceptual framework of traditional healing practices universally shared by several folk cultures and to analyze contemporary health care within framework. This paper also explore on the changes in traditional care behavior, Magico-religious belief and behavior on their healthcare system. Four village's ferrisemar, Umargohan, Bhunnda Kona, Harra tola had selected from pushprajgarh Block, Anuppur, District M.P. To achieve objectives ethnographic fieldwork methods include Interviews, observation and focus group discussion was applied for the study. Hundred respondents twenty five from each village were selected for interview.



KEYWORDS: Traditional Healthcare behavior, Preventions and Cure of Illness and Disease, Magico-religious practices, Performing Rituals and Worship of God-Goddess.

INTRODUCTION

The Baiga and Gond are one of the primitive tribal groups and descendants of the early people. They were living in the inaccessible jungles amidst inhospitable climate governed by the natural agencies like Sun, rain and wind in the remote past. They were leading an unsecured life devoured by the wild animals and birds. They believe in number of superstitions and are highly ritualistic people. Living in the blossoms of the nature they depended on the mercy of unseen powers and the forces which guide them in every walks of their life.

Religion and magic were regarded as sacred and profane which reign and regulate their life. As a primitive people, they were afraid of two things, the disease and the ghosts. Of course disease is a necessary corollary of living beings while the ghosts and the spirits are the requisite attributes of primitive people and very likely they move hand in hand. Many of the disease are being due to the evil spirit.

In this paper here a humble attempt has been made to study their healing practices through magic, superstition various charms, and follow the concept of Parichamahahhuta (water, soil, fire, air and sky) a basic five key elements and herbs and their relevance in the modern age of science and medicine.

The health standard of the Baiga and Gond are good than that of the other tribes. They excel other tribes in terms of environment as well as personal hygiene. As regards the sanitary habits, they are neat and clean yet they suffer from various types of diseases. Disease means illness, suffering, fear, expenditure, unhappiness, tragedy and ultimately death. In this article, I elucidate several concepts shared by traditional folk healing systems and the contemporary health care system. These concepts include origin of illness, harmony and balance, symbols, family and community involvement. The analysis of these concepts developed an understanding the idea of trans-cultural healing practices, as well as a heightened perspective on the shared dimensions of folk and contemporary health care systems. There is a certain enigma about folk cultures. Clandestine rituals, secret remedies, and oral traditions known only to a few invoke questions from contemporary health practitioners who often perceive these practices as a form of superstition or magic.

Overview of Folk Healing Systems

A folk healing system is a set of beliefs that has a shared social dimension. It is what people do when they are ill, as compared with what they should do as determined by a set of social standards (O'Connor, 1995; Wing, 1996). Folk healing methods are often confused with contemporary, alternative, or New Age health practices. Although they share much in common, such as an emphasis on herbal and spiritual remedies, the key consideration that defines folk systems is their history of tradition. Many folk healing systems have endured over time and space and are rooted in a body of knowledge that is customarily passed on orally. Probably, the most significant aspect of folk healing systems is that they pass the test of explanatory competence. That is, they are self-reinforcing and resistant to change from external forces, whereas their own internal models "provide acceptable explanations that account for observation and events" (O'Connor, 1995, p. 23)

Trans-cultural concepts of traditional health care

Regardless of geography, cultural origins, or religious beliefs, there are certain healing concepts that traditional cultures share. In addition to providing an understanding about healing, these concepts reflect the respective cultures' worldviews, especially their beliefs about human relationships with each other and with a supreme being. These concepts are very similar to many contemporary concepts, with one fascinating and consequential difference-the Western-oriented health care system is the only one that separates the body from the mind and the soul. Within folk cultures, healing and spirituality are one. Except for this difference, I found similar concepts between folk systems and the contemporary health care system. These concepts include origin of illness, harmony and balance, symbols, and family and community involvement.

Origins of Illness

A universal concept is the dichotomous origins of illness as either natural or unnatural. Natural illness is attributed to either not following the laws of nature or not maintaining harmony in one's life (Giger & Davidhizar, 1991). Unnatural illness is believed to be caused by an outside influence, usually a person who has the power to inflict evil. As with natural illness, an unnatural illness is multicultural. Whereas natural illness is a result of the individual not following a law of nature or becoming out of harmony, unnatural illness is placed on the passive victim by another who wishes to do harm. Behind the dichotomy of natural and unnatural illness, more fundamental concepts of responsibility and control can be found. There is an implicit theme that persons afflicted with illnesses of natural causes had a role in precipitating the illness by allowing oneself to become stressed, not adhering to a taboo, or violating a law of nature (Wing, 1995)

Harmony and Balance in Nature

Living in harmony with nature and maintaining balance in one's life are essential for health maintenance. Harmony consists of accepting life for what it is and working with, rather than fighting against, principles of nature (Giger & Davidhizar, 1991; O'Conn1995; Sobralske, 1985). Balance is closely related to harmony, but more specifically, balance involves an equalization of opposites. The most frequent opposites that must be in balance are male and female, hot and cold, and good and evil. Others, specific to individual cultures, include left and right, up and down, directions, seasons, day and night, and light and dark (Lin, Inui, Kleinman & Womack, 1982; Rairdan & Higgs, 1992; Spector, 1996; Uba, 1992; Wing & Thompson, 1995). Among Latin Americans and many Asians, foods, medicine, and illnesses possess properties of hot and cold. Hot and cold foods must be eaten in balance, and "hot" diseases are treated with "cold" medicines, whereas "cold" diseases are treated with "hot" medicines. The properties of hot and cold are not necessarily the temperatures of the food or the medicine but how the substance affects bodily heat loss. For example, beer is considered a hot food because it produces heat loss. During pregnancy, a hot condition, women should avoid hot foods and should take only cool foods and medicines (Spector, 1996).

The balance of good and evil is a universal theme that has origins embedded in stories of creation. Good and evil may be conceptualized as dual elements that exist within an individual and as a temporal dichotomy of people who are destined to do good and those who are destined to do evil.

These concepts of harmony and balance imply that there is a natural order to the universe that, if disturbed, results in illness to either an individual or a community.

Symbols

Symbols are representations of concepts or ideas that, like color, elicit a particular emotion. In symbolism, meanings are attributed to objects, and these objects then become an emissary for that particular meaning. The use of symbols is powerful in providing both comfort and fear. Negative symbols are used frequently in folk cultures by the evildoers, bruja, conjurers, and witches to work bad medicine and hex. Certain animals such as snakes, black birds, and owls are harbingers of misfortune to Native Americans. Symbolic actions may also induce illness.

Family and Community

Despite the culture, whether folk or contemporary, the role of the family in healing cannot be denied. In folk cultures, however, the meaning of family extends beyond the nuclear family of parent and children. Family may mean the extended family, a clan, a community, or an entire village.

In many healing rituals, the entire community plays an active role. A Native American sweat for a particular patient, or a peyote ceremony, involves the entire community. Elders are consulted before healing. It is considered irreverent to refuse to discuss patient problems with family and community among folk cultures. Contemporary healers need to understand and incorporate family and community involvement into the plan of care, being sensitive to communication and decision-making lines. Folk healers differentiate between natural and unnatural illness, they do emphasize responsibility and control as ways of preventing and overcoming illness. Responsibility and control, transposed in the nursing literature, become the concepts of self-care and locus of control (Pender, Barkauskas, Hayman, Rice, & Anderson, 1992). The concept of harmony is consistent with the concepts of acceptance, serenity, and balance between distress and elation. The health care literature is replete with research on how accepting one's illness and life situation leads to adaptation and serenity (Demas, Schoenbaum, Wills, Doll, & Klein, 1995; Gosselin & Bergeron, 1992; Monsen, Floyd, & Brookman, 1992).

Balance, closely associated with harmony, is a term that has been in the professional literature for some time. The balance of hot and cold, eating a balanced diet (the food pyramid), balance of male and female (logical and emotional behavior, social roles), and the balance of good and evil (doctrine of most religions) are conventional principles of health care.

Folk symbols and mystical numbers appear mysterious when their meaning is obscure. When logical interpretation is made of a symbol, the meaning and importance become clear. Contemporary health practitioners respect symbols that bring comfort to their patients.

Finally, family and community involvement is a strong concept within contemporary health care systems that requires little elaboration. Nursing interventions include care of the family, family classes are offered to support them in their caretaking or grieving roles, and family support is recognized as instrumental in patient recovery. Community members unite to confront social threats such as alcoholism, communicable disease, and environmental hazards. Community tragedies receive support from members not even associated with the injured. I am an Oklahoman and can recall my experiences the day of the Oklahoma City bombing. The sense of community was evident in the kindness and support that strangers showed for each other. The threat of evil was balanced by the outpouring of good that sustained the harmony of a traumatized community. Within the full spectrum of healing traditions, there are many shared dimensions. My intention was to elucidate several significant common healing concepts in order to demystify folk systems and to present our own system within the framework of a universal community. It is my hope that nurses and other health care professionals will become increasingly competent in trans-cultural health care and, in becoming so, realize both the universal qualities and uniqueness of our own culture.

Attitude towards illness

Generally when the Baiga and Gond suffer from any disease they do not disclose it before others. Their idea is to know the origin and causes of the disease. They look upon any kind of illness and disease as something unnatural and make their own deductions from this proposition. From the childhood their time spend into inured to hardship labor and close contact with nature. Further they are able to bear up for a long time against the disease. So long as they can go to their daily routine work without hindrance they do not care it necessary to make any attempt for the care. They are optimistic with regard to illness more or less careless until they think it as serious.

Concept of Disease

The Baiga and Gond tribes in general along with other tribes believe that the causes of sickness are either supernatural or physical factors and therefore the treatment is invariably carried out by the provision of herbal medicine expert Gunia/panda is preceded by some ritually offered to specific supernatural powers. They fully agree with other tribes that the supernatural causative agents are breach of taboo, sorcery, intrusion of spirit, evil eye, Wrath of God and Goddess intrusion of Ghost, Where as physical causative agents are effects of weather, effects of wrong food, contact with certain organisms, Blood getting Impure, accident and natural calamities and many other.

Table - Disease and their causes

Sl. No	Name of the Disease	Causes of diseases physical factor
1	Cough, head pain, body pain, fever	Changes in environment
2	Malaria	Not maintain cleaning, due to mosquito cut
3	Stomach pain	Absence of clean drinking water, not maintaining cultural food habit
4	Stone	Absence of clean drinking water, not maintaining food habit
5	Jaundices	Absence of clean drinking water, not maintaining food habit
6	Epilepsy	Mental disordered
7	Uncontrolled menstrual cycle (sterility)	Excess physical labor

Sources :- field data

Perception and Diagnosis :

The tribal medicine men Gunia /panda adopt various methods for the diagnosis and treatment different kind of disease. Usually Gunia/panda initiate the diagnosis by touching and feeling the patient's pulse rate or heartbeat. In this way he observes and recognizes the symptoms of diagnosis. On the basis of his own experience and knowledge he easily identifies the causes of disease.

In some cases the patient suffers from sometimes for the sake of diagnosis of ailments of the broken bone or intestinal disorder he applied the touch and feels method and observes the acting body part movement. Urine test are also done for certain disease like jaundice, stomach pain, etc. In the patient's urine mustard oil is put. Depending on how the color of urine changes, in what direction the urine mixes with the oil, how it spreads and whether bubbles are created. In this way the medicine men Gunia /panda make all the diagnosis of the disease. Here he plays the role of a pathologist without using the microscopic.

Measurement of a stalk method (süpa-tuma & rice)

The Gunia applied supa- tuma method for the diagnosis of disease caused by evil spirit or unhappy of god and goddess. For this the gunia must employ another person as a "control". The Gunia himself uses a winnow (stipa), while the "control" holds in his hands a gourd (called tunta, the "control" is therefore known as tumhar). The Gunia "stirs the rice in his stipa, he asks question after question, and the 'control' replies by shaking the tuma. There is a little rice in the gourd which makes a sudden, startling rattling noise. The Gunia sends the gods out as his "detectives". They signal their return "by jerking the Gunia's hand violently off his stipa. He asks them what they have seen. Sometimes he sees the "Seven Sisters" or the "Twenty-one Mothers" mara dev marahi matain his winnow. He frequently converses in an intimate manner with the spirits who come to rest there. At times he drops his stipa and passes into a trance. The barua has an elaborate set of equipment. He erects for himself a small shrine, and plants a couple of poles in front of it. Near the shrine he may also have a wooden ladder, a swing, a rope studded with iron spikes, an iron chain with sharp prongs, a flat board bristling with spikes, and shoes pierced with sharp nails. During his trance he sometimes runs up the ladder without touching it with his hands, and scourges himself with the above- mentioned instruments. He replies to questions either from the ladder or from the spike-studded board. Such performances generally take place on Mondays. After two visits to the Gunia places the patient body free from problem.

Table- Symptoms and method of identifying/ Test of disease

Sl.no	Name of disease	Symptoms	method of identifying /Tests
1	Cough, head pain, body pain, fever	Feel fiver and body pain	Feeling pulse rate
2	Malaria	Every alternate day the patient suffer from high fever	Feeling pulse rate
3	Stomach pain	Slow and fast feeling abdominal pain	Feeling pulse rate and urine taste with mustard oil and touching the stomach
4	Stone	Slow and fast pain in abdominal area	Feeling pulse rate and touching the stomach
5	Jaundices	Yellowness of eyes, urine, nail and skin and stomach area	Feeling pulse rate
6	Epilepsy	Movements of hand and legs, saliva come from mouth and patient feeling dizzy	Feeling pulse rate
7	Uncontrolled menstrual cycle (sterility)	Uncontrolled blood flow, feeling weakness some times patient feeling dizzy	Feeling pulse rate

Sources :- field data

First -Aid-treatment (house hold remedies)

At first they apply house hold remedies like the nature of the application of these remedies are learnt by them in their progenitors. When somebody falls ill in a family and it is of a serious nature which demands the immediate assistance of a doctor as a rule but practically they do not call 'doctor' but a medicine man. Originally he has received the knowledge of medicine from the nature sources.

Table- Disease symptoms and home remedies used by villagers

Sl.no	Name of disease	Symptoms	Home remedies
1	Cough, head pain, body pain, fever	Feel fiver and body pain	Milk boiled with turmeric, salt red chili and jaggey Lemon grass to make decoction
2	Malaria	Every alternate day the patient suffer from high fever	Milk boiled with turmeric, salt red chili and jaggey Lemon grass to make decoction
3	Stomach pain	Slow and fast feeling abdominal pain	Water add Lemon juice sugar and bell anus
4	Stone	Slow and fast feeling abdominal pain	Old unripe mango seed wash with water used twice in a day
5	Jaundices	Yellowness of eyes, urine, nail and skin and stomach area	Turmeric flower hammar ing with aja ki chal and add lime chuna
6	Epilepsy	Movements of hand and legs, saliva come from mouth and patient feeling dizzy	Nadha jotha rope and matta, add with jagarry
7	Uncontrolled menstrual cycle (sterility)	Uncontrolled blood flow, feeling weakness sometimes patient feeling dizzy	Araki red root, red pottar root boiled and make decoction

Sources:- field data

The actions of the gunia like magic, sacrifices and religious endeavor have a great faith and confidence among them. In magic the attitude of the traditional medicine man is one of defiance, control and domination through divinations. Exorcisim, mantra and Jharni' etc.

A Baiga Gunia is supposed to perform certain things which are outside the knowledge of an ordinary man.

- To consult the oracle or divination by sundried rice, sindur, oil and leaves.
- To sow the mustard seed and sundried rice.
- To make disease together of one point of the body and get evil out by sucking and biting.
- To administer medicine.

Such kind of knowledge helps the Gunia to drive away the disease through incantations, magic, and by prescribing some root medicine. He pretends to cast out the evil spirits and cure the disease.

The Baiga and Gond as a whole acknowledge natural causes of illness. They cannot avoid seeing affects and immediate causes. As a rule they can also see the natural causes of the disease. But always there is a suspicion that natural cause is not original one but that evil influences are at work in the first instance.

Treatment through magic and Religion

Magic and religion are both imbued with mystery of the world. These are two ways of tiding over crises by the primitive men. They must have to face the realities of life. They do so with their belief in some superior powers either by trying to compel it in to service by magic or by offering worship through religious approach. According to Somerset Maugham "Magic is not more than the art of employing consciously invisible means to produce visible effects but it has one dogma, i.e. the seen is the measure of the unseen". While James Frazer says "Magic is a spurious system of natural law as well as a fallacious guide of conduct. It is a false science, as well as an abortive art". Magic and religion are both the tools of adoption, the objective being to help man out of difficult situation and relieve their tension."

Magic helps primitive man for the realization of certain desires. It makes the use of uncanny forces in nature for the realization of human desires. The Sorcerer performed good or white magic to release mankind but black magic is wielded by the witches" aiming at bringing disease, death and destruction.

Mallinowski says that both magic and religion arise and function in situations of emotional stress, both are surrounded by taboos and observations, both are strictly based on mythological tradition. Further he points out that magic from many points of view is the most important and the mysterious aspect of primitive man's pragmatic attitude towards the reality. It enables man to carry out with confidence as most vital tasks and to maintain his poise and his mental integrity under circumstances without the help of magic it would demoralize him by despair and anxiety and fear.

Treatment through Charms

As the Science of medicine has not taken any hold in order to escape from the clutches of the various diseases, hence they use charms. In many cases their consumption seems to be the root cause of the disease. Charms are used by the Baiga and Gond for various purposes as well as preventive measures against jaundice fever, stomach pain, stone, and uncontrolled menstrual cycle in case of female and even for a man who was at the point of death. It is also used to secure good health, long life and prosperity. Various articles like soil, amulet of shell, wood, water, mustard seeds, oil, salt, sundried rice, Sindur, neem, plants, herbs or instruments are used for the purpose. Mustard seeds and rice are used in exorcism by the Baiga. Ghost and other evil spirits have a lively dread of these seeds.

The Baiga and Gond culture not only deals with their customs and social sanctions, their values and standards but also shows how the human body came into being out of earth/water, warmth (light and fire), sky (ether and air). The ideas of treatment through the panchamahabhuta were developed among the Baiga and Gond which can be collected from their Oral traditions, local folksongs and customs conveying similar ideas as mentioned in the funeral hymns as mentioned in Rigveda. The compositions of five elements are used for the treatment of disease.

Treatment through Panchamahabhuta Water

Water is an essential ingredient used for the preparation of medicine. The water obtained from different sources has different properties and qualities and therefore their effects are also different. A few such examples are given below.

- The water contained in a snail is used by them to cure eye trouble.
- The water collected from a Sal tree (*Shorea Robusta*) is used to cure the burning of urine.
- The dews have certain medicinal properties. The diabetes patients are advised to walk barefooted over the dews of grassy field in the early morning of the winter.
- The water collected from a boat is a remedy for stopping unconscious urination in bed.

Soil

Like water different soils have different medicinal properties.

- The soil created by earthworm (Jiamati) and the earth used to stringing and flies (Birudi) for making their abode are mixed in water and after the soil had settled down, the clean water standing is incanted and then it is given to a patient of excessive thirst. This water brings down thirst to a normal condition.

Fire

Unlike water and soil fire or heat is used in curing ailments. Tobak is one such remedy. By this method the painful or inflamed spot marked with ashes is pricked with red hot rheumatism or a sickle to give the relief of the patient. Sekao is a kind of fermentation which is used to give relief to the patient having pain or swelling in some part of the body.

Air (hoy)

The Gunia /panda before applying any complicated methods of treatment blows the air from his mouth at the time of invoking the charms and jharni to avert the evil spirits.

Belief System

The Baiga and Gond have strong belief system regarding ill health and disease which are glued to traditional parameters based on their age old socio-cultural behaviors. Generally their health condition good but sometimes they suffer various gunia/panda by using plants species. These are as follows.

Table – Knowledge of Gunia panda for curing of disease based on plants animal parts used and their dosages

Sl.no	Name of disease	Plants and animal species (Ingredients Local name)	Plant part used	Method of preparation	Dosages applied
1	Cough, head pain, body pain, fever	Padin,majida,kadva neem and tulsi leaf	Root and leaf Grass	Milk boiled with turmeric, salt red chili and jaggey Lemon grass to make decoction	Applied decoction twice in a day for three days
2	Stomach pain	Stomach pain	Stomach pain	Stomach pain	Stomach pain
3	Stomach pain	Bel ka gudda, kasi ki root, arjun bark, potar ki root.	Root and bark	Chewing all the ingredients and drink water	Applied decoction twice in a day for three days
4	Stone	Savar fish a stone separate, jaggerly.	Animal and stone Paste	Separate stone from fish and rub it into add with water	Paste is applied once for two days
5	Jaundices	Turmeric flower, aja ki chal and chuna	Flower and bark	Turmeric flower hammar ing with aja ki chal and add lime chuna	Applied decoction twice in a day for three days
6	Epilepsy	Nadha jotha rope ,matta, jagarry	Rope	Nadha jotha rope and matta, add with jagarry	Eat the patient for once in a day
7	Uncontrolled menstrual cycle (sterility)	Araki red root, red pottar root	Root	Araki red root, red pottar root boiled and make decoction	Applied decoction twice in a day for three days

Sources:- field data

In the Baiga and Gond tribal society there is no scientific health provider. The Baiga folkhealer who is also known as Gunia/panda uses traditional sources medicine collected from forest hilly areas from different Plants and animal sources. They use somatic (material), psychosomatic (both action and materials) and psychic (action) medicines to cure the patients suffering from epidemic, chronic disease and the ailments said to be the results of anger to spirits, God and Goddess and the black magic etc.

The Baiga Gunia plays a very vital role in catering to the health care needs of thousand of their population. They use some methods that have a support from religious beliefs to cure people suffering from disease and much kind of disabilities. They are capable of demonstrating an amazing range of medical skills and expertise that extends from treating emergencies like poisonous bites and safe delivery to curing asthma and their bronchial problems having complicated features. They have learnt the practice from their rather or master medicine men since their childhood age through the process of roaming around in the forests in collecting and identifying plants, interacting with them regarding medicinal uses of plants and treatment procedures. Further they have the skill to identify socio-cultural behavioral and religious implications of illness suffered by the patients whom they treat. For this reason they treat the patient in such a way which is culturally and socially approved. In thousands of the Tribal dominated villages located in remote forest and hilly area where there is no medical facility they are the source of support of hope for their survival. They are the carriers of healing traditions, which have been orally transmitted from generation to generation. From a cross-cultural perspective the role of tribal medicine men Gunia /panda may coincide with an astrologer, a sorcerer, a witch doctor, and a diviner. In an anthropological term they are labeled as 'Shaman' who cures illness of the people by using medical practices, herbal as well as mineral medicine. They provide client centered, personalized health care that is culturally appropriate holistic and tailored to meet the needs and expectations of the patients. They are well aware of the man plant and animal spirit interplay in the cause and the cure of the disease. They view the interplay through their conservative world view and belief system. The Baiga and Gond curers' use plant based medicines against disease.

CONCLUSION

The tribal medicine man Gunia /panda also play a key role in plant protection and conservation and possess of skill on sustainable healing of various diseases without causing any damage to the nature. This knowledge of treatment of various diseases transmitted from generation to generation. Baiga and Gond Gunia /panda in an age of modern science and technology serve the people in the traditional healing practices through magic, charms, Panchamahabhuta and strong faith in superstition. These methods are still survived like other socio-cultural and religious traditional healthcare practices in the remote hilly forest villages. But in spite of his deep rooted knowledge on the healing tradition their traditional role as a health provider has shown some decaying trends due to the diversified factors like promotion of westernized system of healthcare, massive depletion of medicinal plants resources in the forest, lack of willingness to learn and adopt among the younger generation as well as lack of dissemination and transmission of knowledge.

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