

Study of indigenous technical knowledge (ITK) towards smoked fishes: Perceived as traditional medicine

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Madhya Pradesh has rich and varied inland fisheries resources. It has got 1.19 lakhs hectares of water area in the form of pond, reservoirs, rivers, lake, etc. Agriculture, forest & craft were the only source of livelihood for these fisherwomen, but fisheries being and allied activities could not be development much. It was found that in order to increase fish productivity of forms with the increasing awareness about women participation in different enterprises and their contribution to economy, intense efforts are being made at upgrading the skills of women and providing them with greater opportunities and demand for smoked fish in fisheries sector in the Satpudha region in Madhya Pradesh. The Jabalpur Division in M.P. is the largest smoked fish market, where smoke fish from almost all nearby districts is brought, traded and taken to the other districts in the region. The fisherwomen of this area are mostly involved in fish farming and are eaters of smoked local fishes. Fisherwomen have involved various technologies in fisheries over a period of time by trial and error, continuous observations and evaluation to use the traditional practices in this field. The specific objectives of this study were to document, methods and utility of indigenous knowledge of fisherwomen for smoking of fishes in Chhindwara district and to explore their own rationale behind the use of this knowledge. Traditional processing techniques are in harmony with socio-economic condition imposed by the alternating floods and recessions of the river system migration of fish and fishermen, absence of freshwater fish pond, strong traditional marketing system for wet and dried fish, prawn and traditional food habits and also traditional medicine for cure of cough, fever and cold for their communities. The present study on smoke fish at Chhindwara district reveals that the quality of smoke fish general is very good. Consumers of smoke fish in this region are poor tribal laborers working in plantations; estates coal mines and weaker sections in the society. Their socio-economic and educational back grounds compel them to go for low cost stuffs smoked fish towards their cough, fever and coldness for instant cure by eating less than 50 gm of smoked fish and its curry rather than quality product. We found the reasons for adopting traditional practices by fisherwomen in Chhindwara district and to explore their own rationale behind the use of this knowledge. The findings to the present study indicated that majority of the fisherwomen were high adopters of recommended traditional smoked technology and these ITKs are being widely used and are quite popular, it is commonly observed that they stress more on fish than local prawn as they get quick return from it. As there is much demand of smoked fishes in rural market, fisherman quite often smoked fishes and do sell it round the year. However the fishermen are not aware of the improved post harvest technique of smoked fishes. If they are made aware of improved PHT methods and techniques, lot more gains can be derived which will help to sustain their livelihood. Efforts are needed to organize co-operative marketing and processing of smoked fish. Awareness programme to improve the quality of smoke fish is the need of the hour which will ensure quality improvement and thereby good health as traditional medicine available at their area of the consumers as well as contribute better returns to the producers and dealers. The need of the hour is to utilize various development schemes for evolving profitable fish culture techniques, which can generate self-employment for rural women.

Keywords: Traditional medicine of smoked fishes, indigenous technical knowledge (ITK), and fisheries

Biography

Sushant Punekar obtained the degree of M.Sc. (Zoology spl.- Fish & Fisheries) in 1993, from Rani Durgavati Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur (M.P.). After obtaining the P.G. degree, he was appointed as Farm Scientist [Fisheries] at Indian Veterinary Research Institute (IVRI), ICAR, Izatnagar, Bareilly (U.P.). During the service, he has cleared NET Examination in Agricultural Extension & Fisheries in 1998 & 1999 of ASRB, ICAR, New Delhi. He completed Ph.D. in 2003 and did pioneer work on "Impact of Fisheries Extension Programme in the Development of Fisheries for Rural Area in Jabalpur District (M.P.)" from Rani Durgavati Vishwavidyalaya, Jabalpur (M.P.). He was awarded towards submitting best technology under Indigenous Technical Knowledge [ITK] on Fisheries by Mission Mode Project (NATP), ICAR, New Delhi. Further, he served as Executive (Technical) on deputation by Selection at National Fisheries Development Board [NFDB], Department of Animal Husbandry, Dairying & Fisheries, Ministry of Agriculture, Govt of India, Hyderabad (A.P.) from 2007 to 2009. Pursuing his research on Fisheries, he has been awarded two research projects by UGC.

He has to his credit 33 publications which include research papers, chapters in technical bulletin/course manual, and popular articles. He has been associated with various activities concerning the development, management, teaching, research, extension execution and planning of Inland fisheries for the last 13 years. He is currently holding position as assistant Professor (Zoology spl.: Fisheries) at Govt. Autonomous Postgraduate College, Chhindwara (M.P.) selected through Madhya Pradesh Service Commission as Gazetted Officer under Higher Education Department, Govt. of Madhya Pradesh in 2009. He has taught Zoology and Fisheries in B.Sc. and M.Sc. courses.

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