

Empowering Earth, Empowering Self: Women's health and sustainability through Natural cure approach

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Abstract- This paper explores the intrinsic connection between women's health and environmental sustainability through the lens of natural healing and traditional medicine. It posits that empowering women to embrace sustainable, plant-based health practices not only enhances their personal well-being but also contributes to the overall health of the planet. By examining cultural practices, the ecological impacts of modern medicine, and the resurgence of plant-based and holistic therapies, the paper advocates for a re-alignment with nature that is both feminist and eco-conscious.

Central to this exploration is the pivotal role that plants and the knowledge of their medicinal and nutritional properties play in fostering women's health and promoting sustainability. Drawing upon both traditional wisdom and modern ecological practices, the paper argues that women can empower themselves and the planet by integrating plant-based remedies into their daily lives. By cultivating a deeper awareness of plants whether for healing, nourishment, or self-care women can reclaim control of their well-being while simultaneously advancing environmental sustainability. This fusion of traditional knowledge with eco-conscious living serves as a path to holistic empowerment, encouraging women to connect with the earth not only as caregivers for themselves but also as stewards of the environment.

Keywords- Empowering Earth & Self, Environmental Consciousness, Herbalism, Eco-Consciousness

I-INTRODUCTION

In an age dominated by synthetic solutions and fast-paced technological advancements, the ancient and natural methods of healing, particularly through plants, are often overlooked. For centuries, women around the world have turned to nature's remedies for health, nourishment, and emotional wellbeing. From herbal teas that soothe the body to plant-based remedies that regulate hormonal health, the connection between women and the natural world is profound and

deeply rooted in history. However, this precious knowledge of plant-based healing is at risk of being lost, especially among younger generations. In modern society, where pharmaceutical treatments are often prioritized, the importance of sustainable, plant-based health practices has been diminished. Yet, plants have the power to transform both personal health and the environment. By focusing on women's health and wellbeing through natural cures, we not only empower women to take control of their bodies but also promote a sustainable, earth-friendly approach to healing.

Empowering future generations of women with the knowledge of plant-based remedies fosters a twofold approach to health and sustainability. It enables women to reconnect with the earth, learning to rely on its gifts for both physical and emotional healing. At the same time, it cultivates a sense of responsibility toward the planet—encouraging conservation efforts and sustainable practices in plant harvesting and replanting. By educating women about the vast array of plants that can support their health, we also educate them on the importance of environmental preservation, creating a culture where both personal wellbeing and ecological sustainability are prioritized. This approach to health—one that emphasizes natural cures, sustainability, and women's empowerment—can revolutionize not just individual lives but also the global community. By nurturing this connection between women and the natural world, we pave the way for a future where both human and environmental health are in harmony, empowering women to heal themselves while safeguarding the planet for future generations.

In a world where modern medicine often relies on synthetic chemicals, many are returning to the roots of healing: plants. This paper explores the crucial link between women's health, sustainability, and the profound wisdom embedded in plant-based remedies. Increasing awareness about the medicinal and

nutritional uses of each plant is key to empowering women in both personal health and ecological stewardship. Learning about each plant's purpose and potential in daily life can improve health outcomes and contribute to a more sustainable future.

II- REVIEW OF LITERATURE

For generations, women have been the keepers of plant knowledge—healers, midwives, caregivers, and community herbalists. Across cultures, it was often women who understood which herbs to use, how to prepare them, and when to pass that wisdom down.

In India, we see women's cooperatives not only reviving herbal traditions but also creating economic independence while protecting endangered plant species.

In South America, Indigenous women remain central to health care in their communities, especially in areas where access to Western medicine is limited. Their plant knowledge plays a crucial role in maternal and reproductive health.

And even in Western urban centers, we're witnessing a resurgence of herbal wisdom—where women are using plants to manage stress, regulate cycles, and build healing communities outside of traditional health systems.

A Tribal Woman's Herbal Legacy in Odisha, India, Sita, a 45-year-old tribal woman from the Kandhamal district, has preserved generations of herbal knowledge passed down through her maternal line. Facing chronic menstrual issues and limited access to formal healthcare, she turned to forest-grown herbs like *Ashoka* and *Shatavari*. Her self-healing journey inspired her to start a small community initiative teaching other women how to prepare plant-based remedies.

Urban Wellness Through Balcony Gardening: A Mumbai IT Professional's Journey, Priya, a 29-year-old tech worker dealing with burnout and hormonal imbalance, began growing healing herbs like tulsi, aloe vera, and lemongrass on her balcony. Integrating herbal teas and oil infusions into her daily life led to better mental clarity and menstrual regulation.

In rural Cusco, local midwife and herbalist Maria uses native plants like *uña de gato* and *maca* to support prenatal and postnatal care for indigenous women. Her work merges ancestral knowledge with community health empowerment.

Women have long been the primary healers in their communities, often passing down knowledge of plants and herbs used for medicinal and spiritual purposes. From Ayurveda to Traditional Chinese Medicine, and Indigenous knowledge systems, plants have been central to healing practices.

In an age dominated by pharmaceuticals, many women are rediscovering the importance of plants for addressing health issues such as hormonal imbalances, mental health challenges, and chronic conditions. Plants offer a wide range of benefits for issues like menstrual health, fertility, skin care, digestive health, and emotional well-being.

Key examples of beneficial plants:

- Maca root: Balances hormones and enhances energy.
- Chasteberry (Vitex): Supports reproductive health and alleviates menstrual cycle symptoms.
- Lavender: Reduces anxiety, stress, and promotes better sleep.
- Echinacea: Boosts immunity and fights infections.

Sustainability in the Use of Plants: The growing awareness of how industrial agriculture and chemical-heavy pharmaceuticals harm the environment has led to a resurgence in plant-based, eco-friendly health practices.

Examples of sustainable practices:

Wildcrafting: Harvesting plants from the wild in a responsible and respectful manner.

Permaculture: Creating sustainable gardens that mimic natural ecosystems and can be used to grow medicinal plants.

Local Herb Farming: Supporting local, organic herb farms and cultivating home gardens that reduce carbon footprints and encourage biodiversity.

III- Research Gap

All over the world, plant based healing was followed by our ancestors, and continuously integrated its use in the new generations also. But due the fast relief of pharmaceutical medicines declined the recognition and use of plant based medicines and its healing benefits.

The significant role of plant-based remedies in promoting women's health and wellbeing has been largely overlooked in contemporary medical and wellness practices. While traditional herbal and plant-based remedies have long been integral to women's health—contributing to physical, emotional, and

reproductive wellbeing—the rise of modern pharmaceutical interventions has led to a diminishing recognition of these natural healing practices.

Despite their historical importance, plant-based remedies and their contributions to women's health remain underexplored and undervalued in current wellness discourses. This knowledge gap extends to younger generations, *who may be disconnected from the traditional use of plants and herbs, and may also be unaware of the ecological and health benefits these plants offer.*

Our Younger generations need to be educated not only about the health benefits of these plants but also about their critical role in sustaining the environment. By fostering an understanding of plant names, uses, and the importance of preserving medicinal plants, we can install a sense of responsibility and environmental stewardship.

Therefore, there is a pressing need to reconnect modern society with the plant-based remedies and awareness about each plant in their surroundings that have historically nurtured and healed women's bodies and minds. Educating younger generations about the intrinsic value of plants not only for their medicinal properties but also for their environmental importance can help preserve these practices and plant species for future generations.

The main aim of this research is to fill that gap by exploring the awareness of plants and its healing benefits through traditional methods to modern digital tools such as Curriculum inclusion, Hands on learning , and by Using Technology & Social Media, TV advertisement, Art & Expression. These tools will enhance their knowledge and understanding about each plants and it will definitely make changes for a sustainable and nourished future generations.

IV- OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To raise awareness about the benefits of each plant in enhancing women's health.
- To educate young individuals about the historical and modern uses of plants in supporting women's health, including their role in hormone regulation, menstrual health, pregnancy, and emotional wellbeing.
- To educate future generations about the diverse range of plants that can be found in their local environments as well as globally

- To nurture a generation that values sustainable agricultural practices, such as organic farming and permaculture.
- To highlight sustainable practices that rely on plant-based healing.
- To discuss how knowledge of plants connects individual empowerment with ecological responsibility.

V-CHALLENGES AND CONSIDERATIONS

- Access to Knowledge: One of the primary challenges is ensuring equitable access to plant-based health education. Many women, especially in urban areas or low-income regions, may not have access to resources that teach them about the healing potential of plants.
- Cultural Sensitivity: As interest in plant-based healing grows, it is essential to be mindful of cultural appropriation. Many plants and remedies come from indigenous or traditional communities, and there is a need to honor and respect their origins.
- Scientific Validation: Despite the growing popularity of herbal medicine, there is still a gap in scientific research validating the efficacy of many plant-based treatments. More studies are needed to solidify these remedies' place in modern health practices.

VI- LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study purely relies on secondary data, and while extensive data exists, primary data collection could further enhance the study's quality.

VII- RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Secondary data have been used for this study, sourced from various journals, articles, and web resources were used to connect the integrated plant-based remedies in the women's lives.

VIII- WAYS TO RECONNECT WITH NATURE, NURTURE THE FUTURE MINDS BY PROMOTING MENTAL AND PHYSICAL WELL-BEING, AND BUILDING SUSTAINABLE HABITS- IN A TECH-DRIVEN WORLD

- Plant-Based Mindfulness Practices:- Teach kids to

sit quietly with a plant, notice its color, smell, texture, and sounds around it. Introduce calming teas (like chamomile, tulsi, or lemon balm) as a self-care ritual to replace soda or energy drinks.

- **Healing & Learning through Herbal Education:-** “Know Your Herb” Campaigns in schools or on social media., Host DIY Natural Remedy Workshops (e.g., aloe vera gel for skin, peppermint oil for headaches), Include plant medicine history in lessons: Ayurveda, Traditional Chinese Medicine, Indigenous healing.
- **Plant-Centered Education Models:-** Green Curriculum: Infuse subjects with plant relevance (math with garden plots, science with photosynthesis and ethnobotany).
- **Urban Plant Awareness for Modern Spaces:-** Encourage green decor at home (air-purifying plants, vertical walls), "Plant a Desk Buddy" initiative where every student has a plant on their study/work desk and teach kids how to grow herbs in balcony pots, windowsills, or hydroponic setups.
- **Tech Meets Plants:-** Use plant-identification apps like Picture This or PlantNet to learn about local flora, Create TikToks, Reels, or YouTube videos featuring plant tips, DIYs, or plant transformations and Build or play eco-themed games that include plant knowledge or sustainable gardening.
- **Emotional & Mental Wellness through Nature Connection:-** Practice "Plant Journaling", Use essential oils for aromatherapy, Start a nature mandala art class using leaves, petals, and seeds.
- **Eco-Conscious Habits from a Young Age:** Introduce low-waste living through plant-based products, Celebrate Earth Day with tree planting, composting demos, Promote "Seed Bomb" activities in neighborhoods or parks.
- **The “Green Mindset” Movement:-** Encourage the next generation to think: "If I take care of the Earth, I’m also taking care of myself." This becomes a core life philosophy balancing modern living with ancestral wisdom.

IX- FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

1. **Environmental Impact:** By shifting to plant-based treatments, women not only reduce their reliance on synthetic chemicals but also contribute to ecological balance by using resources that are renewable and require less energy-intensive production.
2. **Plant-based health practices** empower individuals to take control of their health while making eco-conscious choices.
3. **Food as Medicine:** Emphasizing the role of common kitchen plants such as garlic, ginger, turmeric, and mint are highly effective for health purposes.
4. **women’s engagement** in sustainable farming, herb preservation, and seed-saving initiatives directly impacts biodiversity.
5. **Personal Empowerment:** Learning about the various uses of plants allows women to take charge of their well-being in a world where their health choices are often influenced by external forces.

X- CONCLUSION

This research indicates a strong connection between plants and women. By embracing a deeper awareness of plants and their uses, women can reclaim their health and their connection to the Earth. Through education, responsible use, and sustainable practices, plant knowledge can transform individual well-being while fostering a more sustainable future for the planet. Empowering women to reconnect with the healing power of plants is not just a health movement, it's an ecological one. As women learn to use plants for healing, nourishment, and self-care, they also become champions for a healthier planet. This transformation holds the key to both personal and collective empowerment.

REFERENCES

Include studies on herbal medicine, sustainability practices in agriculture, and feminist eco-theory, as well as resources on plant identification and usage.