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Traditional medicine in public health in azad Jammu and Kashmir: Role of economic resources of TCMs

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Traditional complementary and alternative medicine (TCM) is one of the major sources of health care system in many developing countries including azad Jammu and Kashmir of Pakistan. The present study is aimed to highlight the economic natural resources of TCMs for research, policy and practice; and their accessibility, availability, adaptability and acceptability in traditional health care system.

Methods: The present study was carried after receiving ethical approval from concerned department. The data was collected using semi-structured questionnaires, open ended interviews and group discussion with Traditional Health Practitioners (THPs) and local people. The collected data was analyzed using anthropological and ethno botanical indices.

Results: The major findings include concept of THPs and indigenous rural people about TCMs obtained from locally occurring plants to maintain their health; Common reasons for use of locally available TCMs to treat incurable diseases; the commonly used plant species used in TCMs from aJK; frequently used plant part, mode of herbal recipes and mode of administration.

Conclusion: The study concludes that TCMs prepared from locally available plants are preferred over other medicine and plants commonly used should be recommended for rigorous use in TCMs at mega scale and may be incorporated for health policy, research and practice.

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