

## From water to Remedy: Fishes as Ethnopharmacological Resources along the River Ravi, Punjab, Pakistan

Noor Muhammad<sup>1\*</sup>, Muhammad Altaf<sup>2</sup>, Arshad Mahmood Abbasi<sup>3</sup>, Abdul Majid Khan<sup>4</sup> and Khalid Javed Iqbal<sup>5</sup>

1. Department of Zoology, University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Pakistan
2. Institute of Forest Sciences, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan
3. Department of Environment Sciences, COMSATS University of Information Technology Abbottabad-Pakistan
4. Department of Zoology, University of the Punjab, Pakistan
5. Department of Zoology, The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan

\*Corresponding author e-mail: [email.noor@gmail.com](mailto:email.noor@gmail.com)

**Citation:** Muhammad, N., M. Altaf, A. M. Abbasi, A. M. Khan, and K. J. Iqbal. 2023. From water to Remedy: Fishes as Ethnopharmacological Resources along the River Ravi, Punjab, Pakistan. Journal of Wildlife and Ecology 7(3):93-108.

### SUMMARY

Fisheries are extremely important in human communities, both culturally and educationally. Local knowledge is being lost as the planet undergoes rapid environmental and cultural changes. Knowing how public understand ecology and climate change and adopt habits in reaction to it is critical for understanding human resource usage. This project was designed to document and preserve information regarding the utilization of fish species among people in the vicinity of Ravi River in Pakistan. Informants in the research area have extensive knowledge of the cultural and traditional medicinal usage of fish species. To collect data from informants (n = 77), interviews as well as questionnaires were used. The ethnopharmacological and folklore data of taxa of fishes in the study area were documented and evaluated using Principal Component Analysis (PCA), Informants of ailment (IA) and Relative abundance of Informants of ailment (RIA). In total, 21 species of fish were used ethnomedicinally in the study region to heal a different sicknesses like antibacterial, antifungal, cancer, cold, cough, improve lactation in mothers, eyesight, flue, impotency, joint pain, memory, muscle, night blindness, paralysis, reduce overweight, skin burn, vitamin D, and weakness. During the investigation, it was discovered that *Oreochromis aureus* had the greatest RIA (RIA=0.49) and *Wallago attu* had the lowest (RIA=0.01). Our findings revealed that the study area's informants have significant traditional knowledge regarding the medical and other benefits of fish species. Additionally, full information of chemicals, and activities of chemicals produced from fish species with the highest IA and RIA, could be useful for drug study.

**Keywords:** Traditional knowledge, Medicine, Ethnozoology, Fishes

Received in July, 2023

Accepted in September, 2023

### INTRODUCTION

Humans have traditionally relied on aquatic resources for a different of purposes. Fish management has always been vital. Freshwater fish has also had a significant impact, particularly as part of local dishes honoring specific monthly events. In order to study the relationships between fish as well as human beings, it is necessary to know the past of these ties. Environmental change and overfishing have already reduced fish

availability along Kenya's coastline (Belhabib et al., 2016; Morales et al., 2017; Svanberg and Locker, 2020).

Rivers, lakes, as well as streams are important features of the Asian environment, supporting a broad diversity of vegetation and animals. There are countless taxa of fishes in Asian waterways, and major significance to the marketplace in rural, generating healthy food both locally and urban population (Morales Muñiz, 2010; Sahrhage and Lundbeck, 2012; IUCN, 2015; Grizzetti et al., 2019). Fishermen may provide significant data for management and conservation of these lakes, streams and rivers, including the potential change in climate. Ethnoichthyology incorporates cultural behavior, as well as vernacular taxonomy, with species vernacular names based on myth, sound, habitat, environment, social relationships and morphological traits. Fish local names are valuable resources for conservationist, and national and international authorities (Costa-Neto, 1998; Kuljanishvili et al., 2020; Altaf et al., 2021; Catelani et al., 2021).

Researchers have identified over 32,000 fish species from around the world, with over 746 species confirmed from Pakistan till now (Nelson et al., 2016; Froese and Pauly, 2022). Ethnobiologists observed dynamic interactions between humans and the surrounding biota, as well as human impact on ichthyofauna. Fish have numerous cultural applications such as medicine, trade, tools, and food (Kinzelbach, 1999; Anderson et al., 2011; Svanberg et al., 2011; Muhammad et al., 2017a; Muhammad et al., 2017b; Muhammad et al., 2018; Altaf et al., 2020; Altaf et al., 2021). The customary utilization of taxa of fishes has though never been reported earlier in River Ravi. As a result, the purpose of present research was to document and preserve customary data and awareness about taxa of fishes and their folklore and medical usage by people living around the Ravi River in Pakistan. We attempted to answer these inquiries: i. What are the basic socioeconomic elements impacting the medical and cultural use of fish species? ii. Which species are most commonly used in the Ravi River? iv. What are the most important considerations when employing fish fauna for medical and cultural purposes? v. How many taxa of fishes are used as curative treatment in the Ravi River? vi. How can we preserve folklore understanding of the medical and folklore uses of taxa of fishes?

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

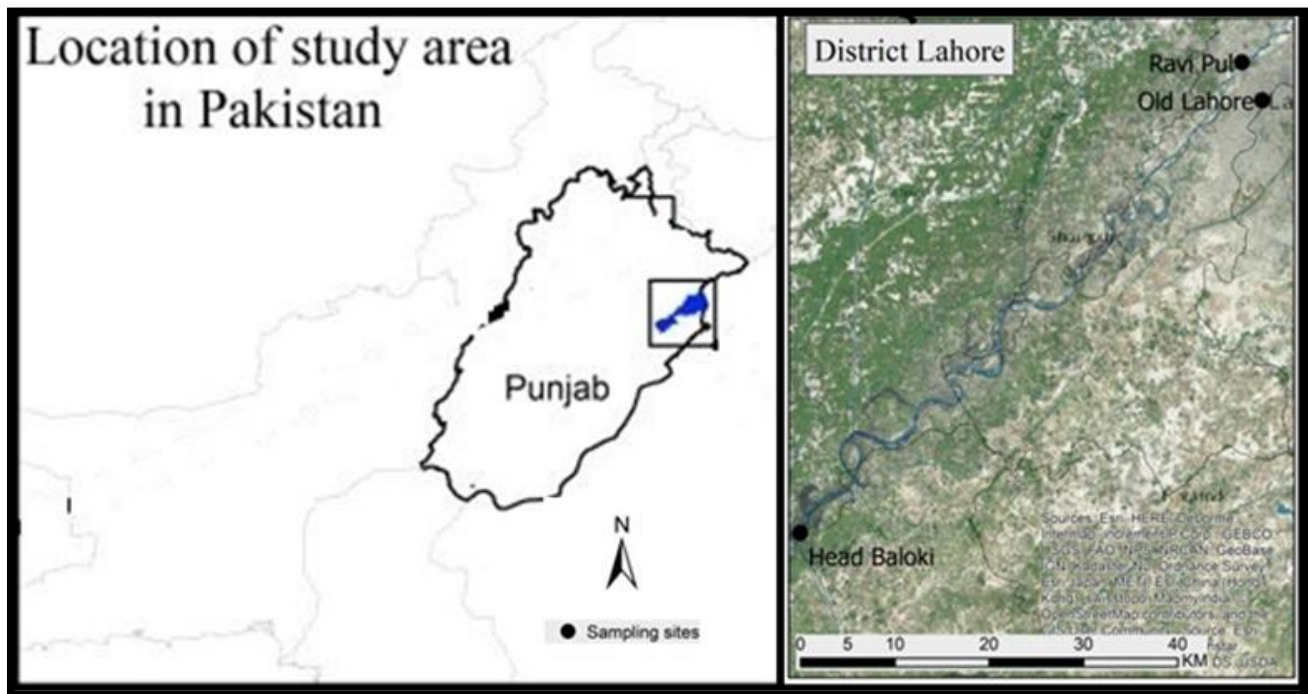
### STUDY AREA

The Ravi River, is present between India as well as Pakistan, is a vital part of the Indus River Basin and serves as the basin's headwaters (Figure 1). The Ravi River's waters flow into the Sea of Arabian via the Indus River, Pakistan. The river begins in the Himachal Pradesh town of Bara Bhangal, Kangra District. After flowing for “720 kilometers”, the river drains a whole catchment area of “14,442 square kilometers” in India. The Dhauladhar and Pir Panjal ranges from a triangle zone as it flows westward (Jain et al., 2007).

### FISH DOCUMENTATION

Fish information was gathered in the vicinity of River Ravi (Figure 1) between January 2018 and December 2021 applying interviews as well as discussions with 77

informants, including questions on informant profile, cultural uses, and ethnopharmacological applications of taxa of fishes, after getting oral prior-informed approval. Profiles of informants were gathered as demographic data. The questionnaires were initially written in English and then translated into Urdu. Prior to the start of survey operations, permission from the "Institute of Forest Sciences, Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan" was obtained. Interviews, photographs, and specimens were collected at various locations and times during the early morning. Informants were chosen at random (Altaf, 2016; Altaf et al., 2018b; Altaf et al., 2020; Faiz et al., 2022; Iqbal et al., 2023). The images of taxa of fishes were also incorporated in the questionnaire. The book known as; taxa of Fishes of Pakistan, it was utilized for identification of fishes of River Ravi (Mirza, 2004).



**Figure 1: The map of River Ravi, Pakistan.**

#### QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

The data of species were noted and checked with Principal Component Analysis (PCA), Informants of ailment (IA) and Relative abundance of Informants of ailment (RIA).

#### RELATIVE ABUNDANCE OF INFORMANTS OF AILMENT (RIA)

The RIA indicates the significance of all fishes of River Ravi (Ilker et al., 2009; Vitalini et al., 2013) and was checked through (Tardío and Pardo-de-Santayana, 2008);

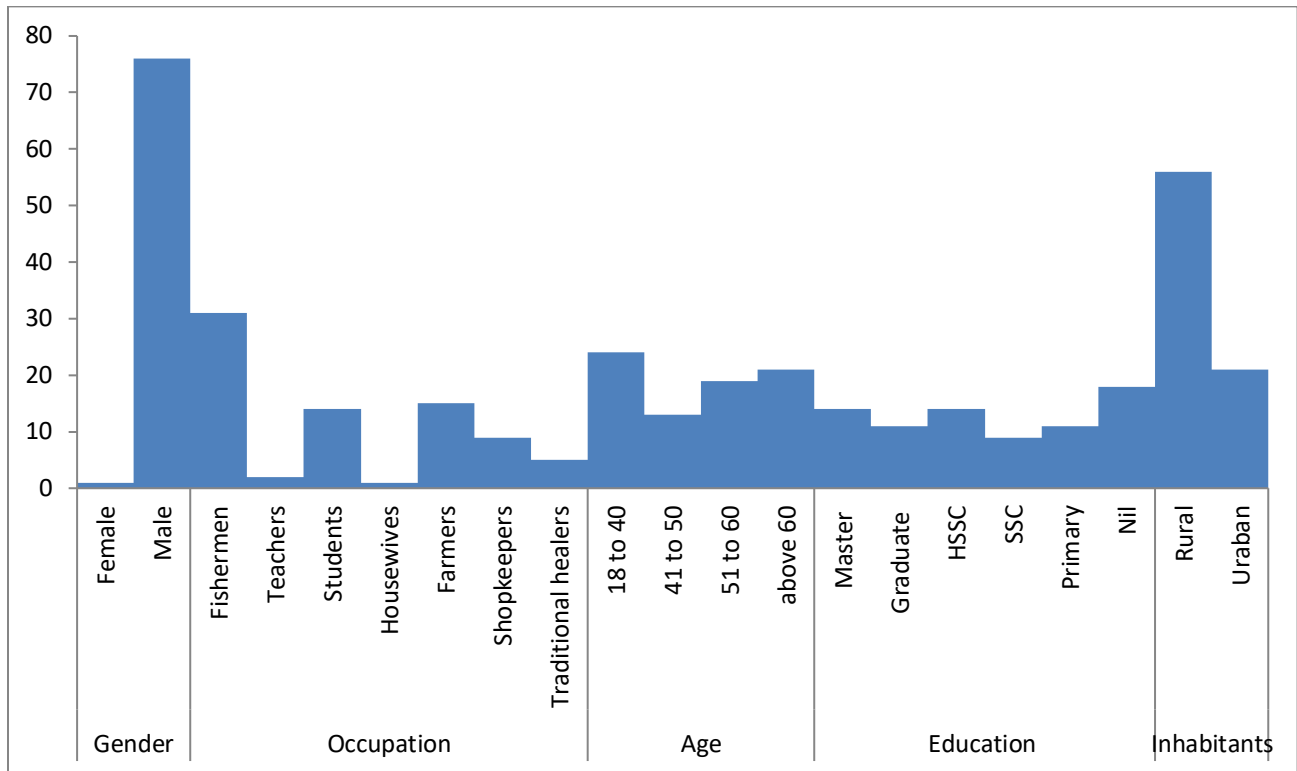
$$RIA = IA/N \quad (0 < RIA < 1)$$

Where "IA" are the informant of ailments and "N" the total informants number.

## RESULTS

### DEMOGRAPHY OF INFORMANTS

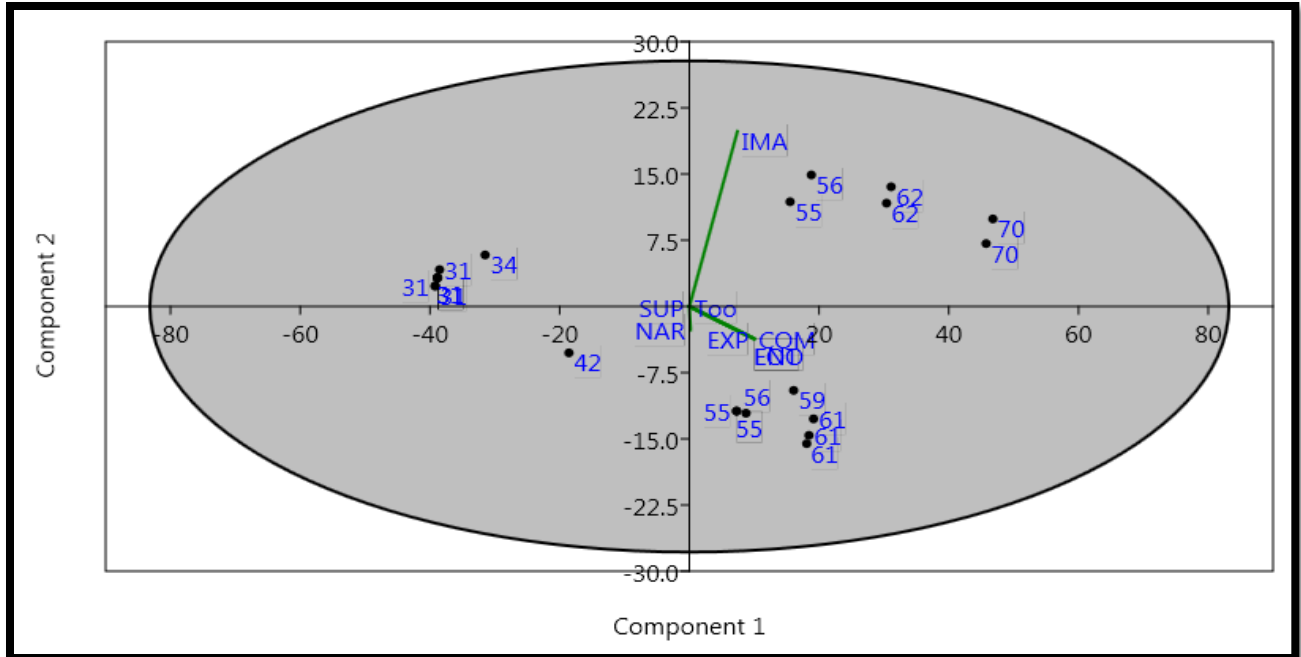
During the surveys, data were collected from total 77 informants (men =76 as well as women n=1) with ages from adults. Data collected from different people of study area i.e. fishermen (31), teachers (n=2), students (n=14), housewives (n=1), farmers (n=15), shopkeepers (n=9) and traditional healers (n=5). The informants were uneducated (23.4%) and educated (76.6%) (Figure 2).



**Figure 2: Profile of Respondents (n=77).**

### PRINCIPAL COMPONENT ANALYSIS (PCA)

In Figure 3, folklore data was examined through PCA, with nine variables such as FC (frequency of citation), IA (Informants of Ailment), SUP (Superstitious), COM (Commercial), ENT (Entertainment), FOO (Food ), EXP (Export), Too (Tool) and NAR (Narratives). The main component analysis revealed the total of all the Eigen values of the entire fauna. The initial Eigen value (933.278) was the highest, suggesting the greatest slope power in the distribution of knowledge along C1 i.e. Component 1. First two PCA components produced 99.1% variance in samples (C1: 74.2%); “component 2” is truncated as (C2: 16.8%). These variables are IMA ( $r = 0.34769$ ), SUP ( $r = -5.13$ ), COM ( $r = 0.46878$ ), ENT ( $r = 0.46878$ ), FOO ( $r = 0.46878$ ), EXP ( $r = 0.46878$ ), TOO ( $r = -0.00$ ) and NAR ( $r = 0.008594$ ) was positively related with PC1 whilst IMA ( $r = 0.93064$ ), SUP ( $r = 9.11$ ), COM ( $r = -0.17199$ ), ENT ( $r = -0.17199$ ), FOO ( $r = -0.17199$ ), EXP ( $r = -0.17199$ ), TOO ( $r = 0.00$ ) and NAR ( $r = -0.12484$ ) is negatively correlated with Component 2 and ( $r = 0.39521$ ) is positively correlated with “C2” (Figure 3).



**Figure 3: Cultural uses of fishes of Southern Punjab analysis through Principal component analysis.**

#### INFORMANTS OF AILMENT (IA)

The fish species indicated by the greatest respondents' number of were often used to treat a range of disorders. *Oreochromis aureus* had a maximum IA (38), followed by *Cyprinus carpio*, *Labeo rohita*, *Ctenopharyngodon idella*, *Labeo calbasu*, and *Cirrhinus mrigala* (36, 35, 34, 33 and 29, respectively) (Table 1).

#### RELATIVE ABUNDANCE OF INFORMANTS OF AILMENT (RIA)

During the study noted that the highest RIA was document for *Oreochromis aureus* (RIA=0.49) and the lowest was reported for *Wallago attu* (RIA=0.01)

### DISCUSSION

The collection of data of informants is crucial in ethno-ichthyological research since it is used to analyze and characterize characteristics connected to ethnopharmacological and folklore utilization taxa of fishes. Because of their higher exposure to modernity, educated families and people in the vicinity of River Ravi were less known with the use of various taxa of fishes to heal universal sicknesses. During the fieldwork, un-educated informants were found to have more ethno-medicinal knowledge than educated informants. People who are uneducated frequently consume fish products. Because they would rather self-medicate than look for help from native Hakeem (i.e. health practitioners). Comparable results were noted in Thailand (Wester and Yongvanit, 1995), Spain (Vallejo and González, 2014a), Pakistan (Altaf et al., 2020; Iqbal et al., 2023), Europe (Svanberg and Locker, 2020), Ethiopia (Gedif and Hahn, 2003; Giday et al., 2009) and Bangladesh (Deb and Haque, 2011). We discovered that rural informants had less awareness regarding species conservation and sustainable usage than urban interviewees. Gathering

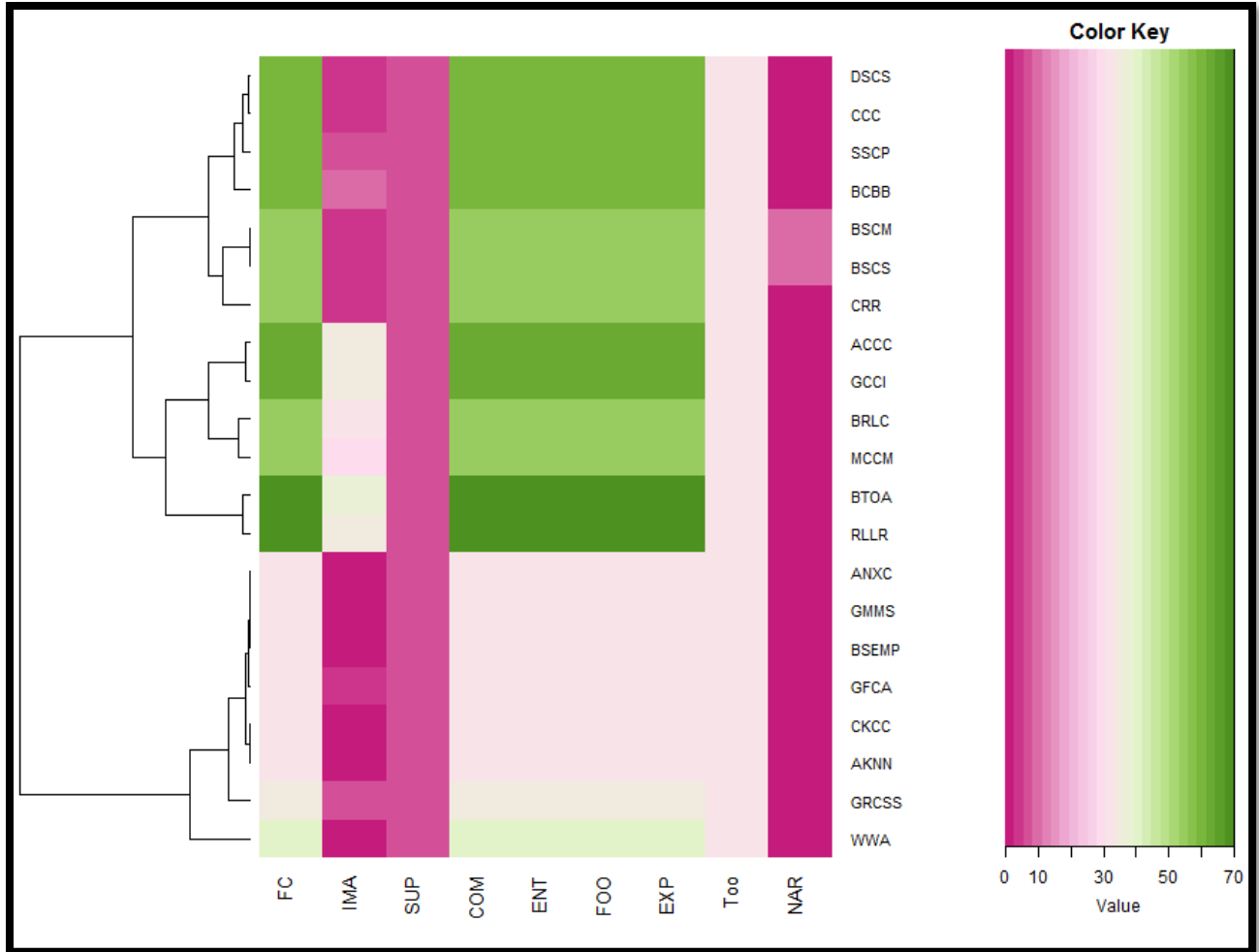
informant social and ethnic data is especially important in social research because this factor is crucial in assessing and understanding the replies received (Easthope, 1995).

The inhabitants in the research area also consumed meat from fish caught in the Ravi River. Ecological considerations like source accessibility, Taxa of fish status in the food web or food chain, or the value of taxa of fishes in the economic and community ties within the region can all be used to address medicinal and cultural reasons. Fish were used for a variety of purposes like ethnopharmacological and customary uses (Vallejo and González, 2014b; Gupta et al., 2016; Altaf et al., 2020; Altaf et al., 2021; Hassan et al., 2022).

All documented fishes i.e. *Mystus cavasius*, *Rita rita*, *Sperata sarwari*, *Xenentodon cancila*, *Channa punctata*, *Channa gachua*, *Channa striata*, *Channa marulius*, *Oreochromis aureus*, *Labeo calbasu*, *Ctenopharyngodon idella*, *Cyprinus carpio*, *Cirrhinus mrigala*, *Labeo rohita*, *Carassius auratus*, *Catla catla*, *Macrognathus pancalus*, *Notopterus Notopterus*, *Chitala chitala*, *Wallago attu* and *Bagarius bagarius* were consumed in local food of in study area (Figure 4). The majority of Muslims live in Punjab, which consumes a lot of fish. People eat fish in a different of ways, including smoked, barbequed, fried, and so on. In Kashmir, for example, residents enjoyed eating fish and employed customary techniques for preservation such as smoking, pickling, and sun drying hours to conserve fish food (Hassan et al., 2022).

*Labeo rohita* is widely consumed in food of local people. This superb food fish's rapid development and high nutritional content sparked studies into its aquaculture possibilities. For example, *Oreochromis aureus* is a common dish with a nice flavor in the fishing community, demonstrating a complex interaction of symbolic and cultural characteristics, as well as materialistic or practical ones, such as the accessibility of this natural asset in the region (Hussain et al., 2015; Muhammad et al., 2019; Altaf et al., 2020; Djidohokpin et al., 2020; Iqbal et al., 2023). Fisheries play a vital part in global food provisioning (Suleman, 1961; Gross, 1975; Naylor et al., 2000; Mora et al., 2011; Iqbal et al., 2023). According to the Tacon and Metian (2009)Tacon and Metian (2009), more than 75 percent of fish production in 2002 was consumed by humans in whole world, and the amount of fresh fish consumption is increasing.

According to the locals, drinking milk after eating any fish can result in Vitiligo (Figure 4). In Pakistan, for example, "if the *Sperata sarwari* parts of body at house; than any type of magic will not impact on human" (Iqbal et al., 2023). In one more research, Djidohokpin et al. (2020) traditional healers frequently use "snakehead fish" as a magical thing to prevent women from commended disloyalty. In his book on Mapuche secrets and legends, Calvo (2016) was written that "if any person eat fish, than it will be bad omen for this person". According to Alves et al. (2012)) written that Brazilians used scales of tarpon fish to remove bad omen". Neuenschwander et al. (2011) wrote that "some fish have mystical properties that can work as an aphrodisiac". Narrative is a tale regarding fish that has no positive or negative impact on humans; for example, "*Channa striata* and *Channa marulius* species of fish have a unique feature of head like a human and body like a fish, which locally known as Jal Pari and Jal Para respectively" (Figure 4), while Altaf et al. (2020) discusses a similar story.



**Figure 4: Cultural uses of fishes of study area, FC (frequency of citation), IA (Informants of Ailment), SUP (Superstitious), COM (Commercial), ENT (Entertainment), FOO (Food ), EXP (Export), Too (Tool) and NAR (Narratives), codes are shown in Table 1.**

All fish are commercially exploited (Figures 4 and 5). Locals in the research area harvested fish for profit and traded them to meet economic requirements. They were caught for food, export, aesthetic purposes, and so on. Ground fish bones are used to produce toothpaste in Chinese tradition. Many different types of fish are traded and either dried or preserved. In Punjab, Pakistan, two fish species, Indian glassy fish and Bronze featherback, are used as aquarium ornaments (Grey et al., 2006; Altaf et al., 2020; Olden et al., 2020).

As reported by the research area's residents, every kind of fish (whether fingerlings or small pieces) were used as a “tool” to catch larger fishes (Figure 4); whilst fish sizes were extremely small (Albright and Lucas, 2021). As previously reported, local residents used fish meat as hook for a variety of fish from the river by Altaf et al. (2021). Furthermore, bait fish are small fish caught by fisherman and used as bait to catch larger fish (Djidohokpin et al., 2020). Typically, baitfish species are common and grow rapidly (Olden et al., 2020). Kaiya was an Australian aboriginal weapon with a fish tail spines cluster that was employed in initiation rites, and



warfare (McConnel, 1953). All of the species discovered in the research area were used for recreational fishing (Figure 4). Because most species are used in ethnopharmacological to treat maladies or for strange ceremonies, catching them is a tremendous source of pleasure and enjoyment (Schramm and Fedler, 1991; Kerr, 1999).

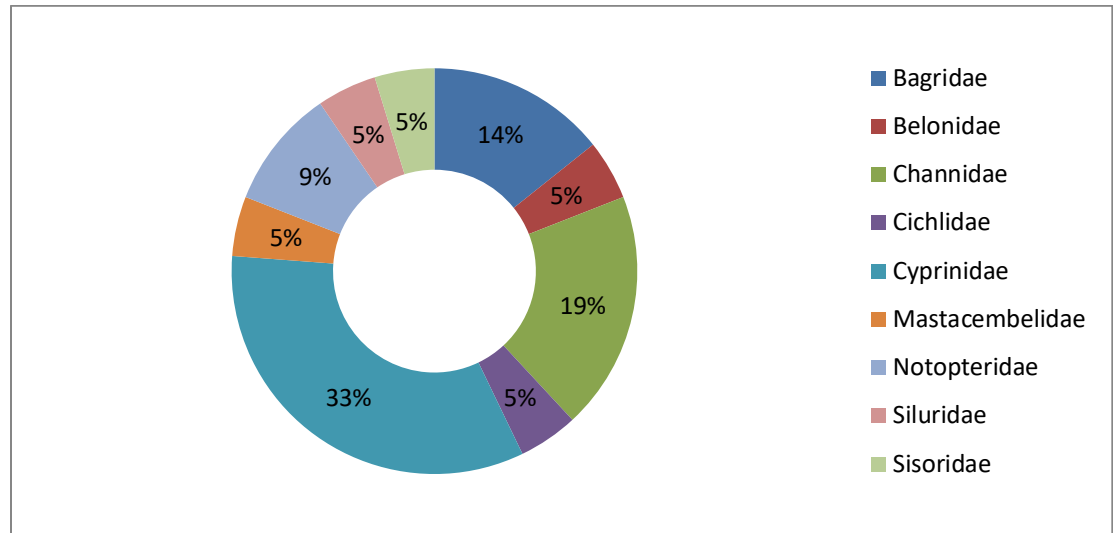


**Figure 5: Cultural uses of fishes in study area.**

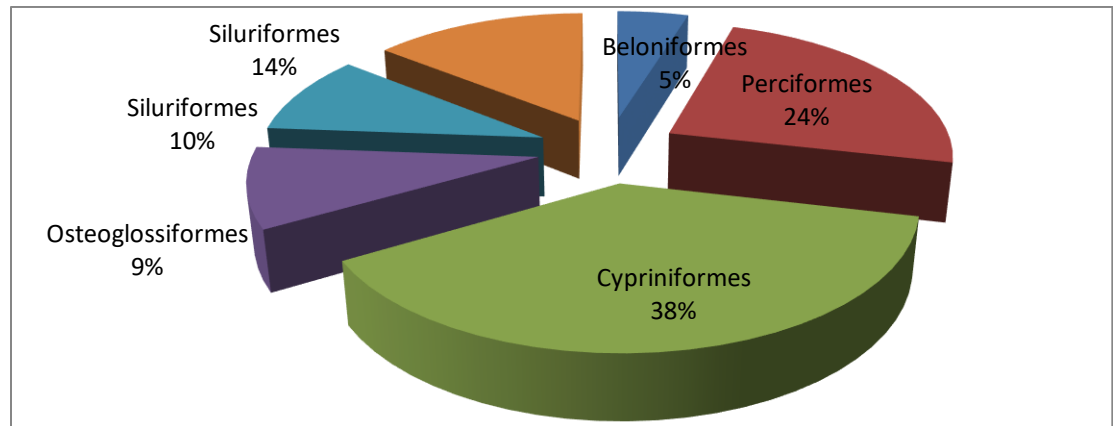
Respondents in the vicinity of River Ravi were well-versed in the cultural and folkloric medical benefits of taxa of fishes. A total of 21 fish species from 9 families (Table 1 and Figure 6) and 6 orders (Figure 7) were used orally and/or topically (Figure 8) to treat a wide range of antibacterial, antifungal, cancer, cold, cough, improve lactation in mothers, eyesight, flu, impotency, joint pain, memory, muscle, night blindness, paralysis, reduce overweight, skin burn, vitamin D, and weakness (Figure 9 and 10).

Meat was the most frequently ingested part, appearing in 10 healing recipes, further followed by oil, brain, scale and bile, which appeared in 7, 2, 1 and 1 recipes, respectively (Figures 10 and 11). During the current investigation, fish flesh was used to treat Antibacterial, Antifungal, Cough, Impotency, Muscle, Night blindness, paralysis, reduce overweight, and Weakness. Fish oil was used to treat colds, flu, vitamin D deficiency, and joint pain. Fish scales were used to treat antibacterial, antifungal, and cough conditions, whereas skin was solely used to treat skin burn. Fish brain is used to heal eyesight and memory, and fish bile is utilized to treat cancer (Table 2).

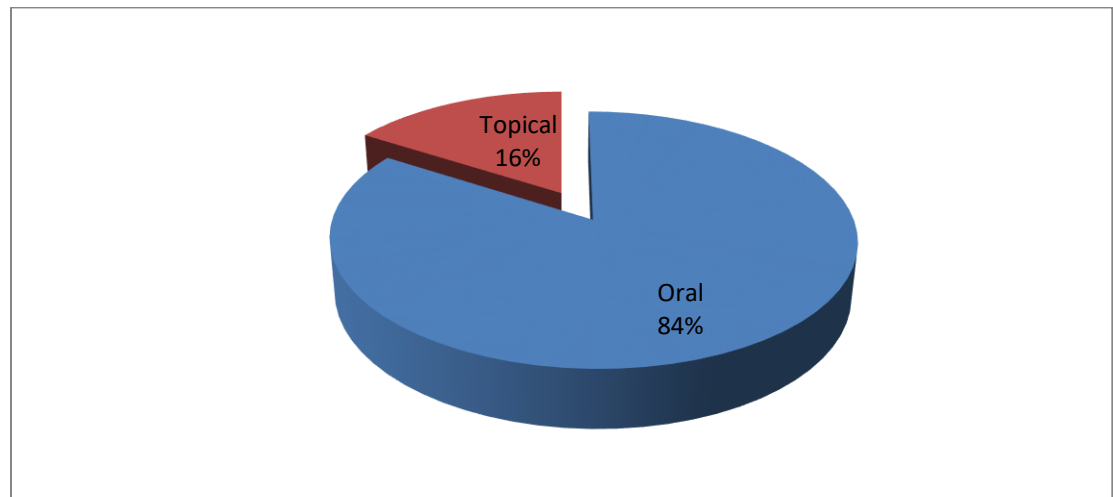




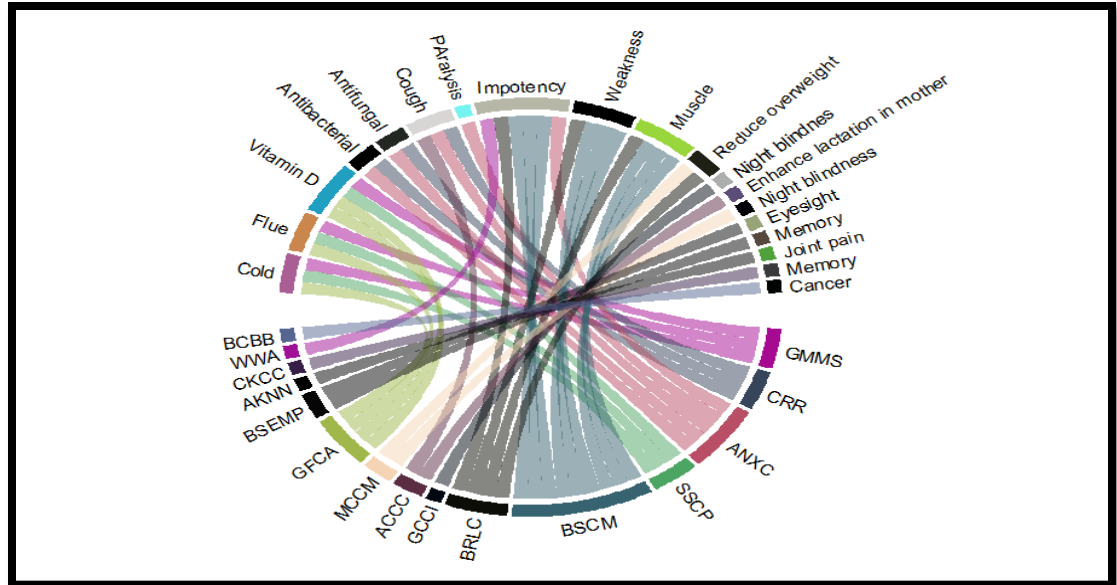
**Figure 6: Families of fishes of study area.**



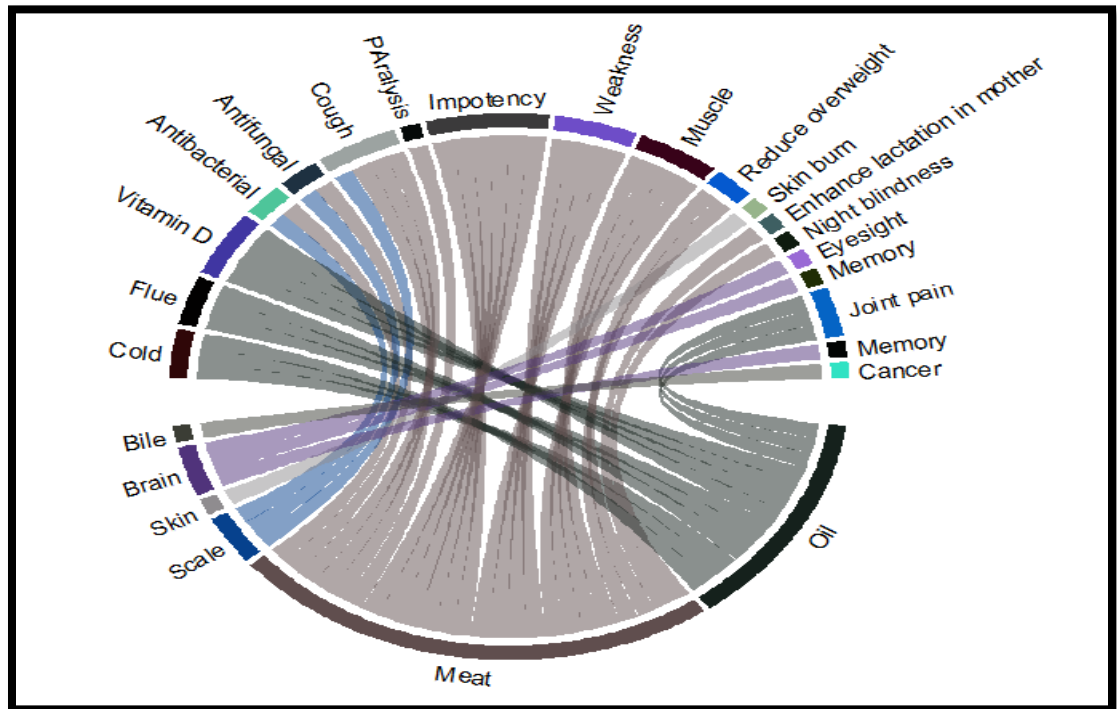
**Figure 7: Orders of fishes of study area.**



**Figure 8: Parts of fishes used either oral or/and topical way in study area.**



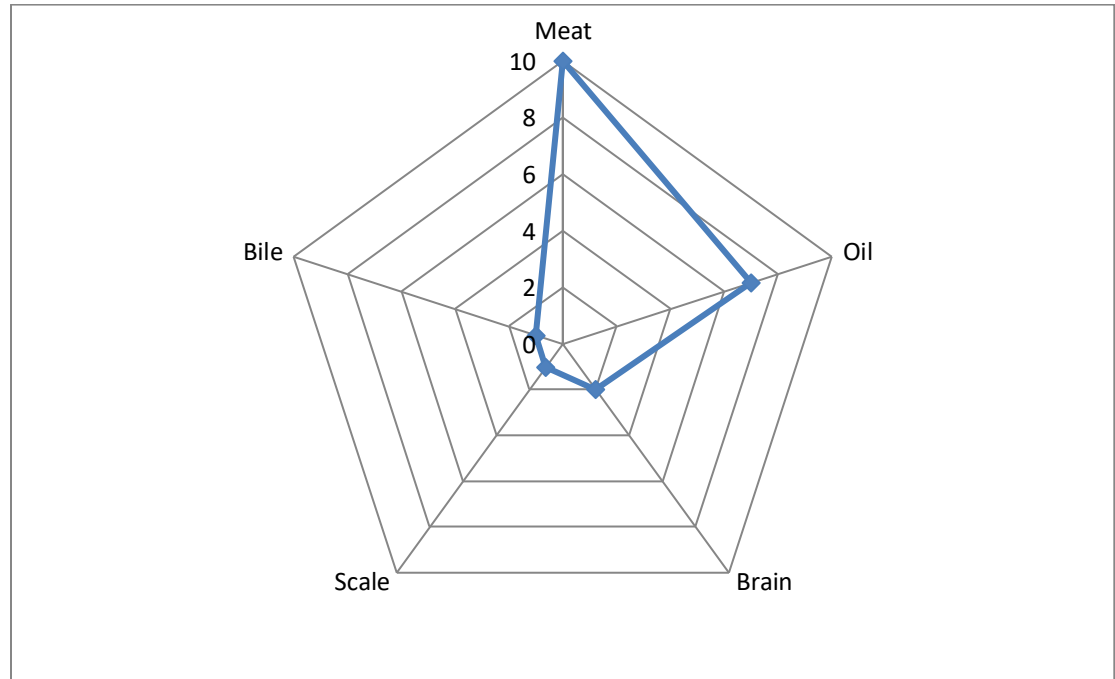
**Figure 9: Species uses against disease in study area (codes are present in Table 2).**



**Figure 10: Body parts uses against diseases in study area (codes are present in Table 2).**

Catfish was used for the antibacterial, antifungal, cough (Figure 9), and has been documented to cure joint problems, healing of skin burns, treat cold, sexual problems, energy and joint pain (Arshad et al., 2014; Altaf et al., 2018a). Spotted snakehead was utilized to treat impotency, weakness, muscle (Figure 9) and this was

reported earlier to cure pain, impotency and weakness, joint and sexual issues (Mahawar and Jaroli, 2008; Saikia and Ahmed, 2012; Teronpi et al., 2012; Altaf et al., 2018a). *Channa marulius* was utilized to therapy of weakness, muscle, reduce overweight (Figure 9), whilst it has been documented to cure sexual issues, memory, rheumatic, impotency, and cold (Deb and Emdad Haque, 2011; Saikia and Ahmed, 2012; Arshad et al., 2014; Muhammad et al., 2017b).



**Figure 11: Parts of fishes used in tradition medicine in study area.**

In another research, Aischgrund Carp was employed for the cure of vitamin D (Figure 9) and the same species is used to cure central nervous system disease, lumbago, memory, eyesight, joint, backbone problems, cough, energy, erysipelas and overweight problems (Vallejo and González, 2014b; Altaf et al., 2018a). Peoples used Gardd carp to cure of night blindness, reduce overweight (Figure 9), whilst earlier research showed that this taxa used to heal the CNS, cough, cold, joint, eyes problems, backbone pain, joint pain, and sexual problems (Muhammad et al., 2017c; Altaf et al., 2018a). Likewise, Roho labeo was employed for the curing of memory, eyesight (Figure 9) and in the past noted to cure urine problem, weakness, rheumatic issues, memory, stomachache, sexual issues, energy, backbone and joint pain (Saikia and Ahmed, 2012; Arshad et al., 2014; Borah and Prasad, 2017; Altaf et al., 2018a). Asiatic knifefish, was employed to heal of joint pain (Table 2), while in the past documented uses to heal chicken pox and joint pain (Deb and Haque, 2011; Mukti et al., 2012). Wallago is used for the cure of impotency (Table 2), while in the past used to treat of memory, dysentery, joint problems piles, liver, cold, liver and sexual problems (Benítez, 2011; Barros et al., 2012; Mawla et al., 2012; Altaf et al., 2018a). Bagarid catfish is used to heal cancer (Figure 9), in the other studies it was used to cure body pain, body burns, stomach pain, impotency and joint issues (Chakravorty et al., 2011; Saikia and Ahmed, 2012).

## CONCLUSION

Fish are used for more than just sickness treatment; they can also be used for sustenance or in folklore. Freshwater catfish, for example, was shown to be a favorite snack among fisherman and local people. Our study revealed that the study region's interviewees have significant customary awareness regarding the ethnopharmacological and folklore benefits of taxa of fishes. Additional research should focus on the variations in ethnoichthyological knowledge of this area in order to safeguard and protect precious data, which may be beneficial for the long-term usage, conservation and management of the native taxa of fishes along the Ravi River in Pakistan. Furthermore, a detailed investigation of active compounds from fish with high RIA could be useful for therapeutic research.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The authors of this article are grateful to the indigenous peoples in the vicinity of River Ravi for giving important data.

## REFERENCES

- Albright, A. J., and M. C. Lucas. 2021. The use of European river lamprey as bait by the UK coarse predator angling community. *Fisheries Management and Ecology* 28(6):542-555.
- Altaf, M. 2016. Assessment of Avian and Mammalian Diversity at Selected Sites along river Chenab., University of Veterinary and Animal Sciences, Lahore, Pakistan.
- Altaf, M., A. M. Abbasi, M. Umair, M. S. Amjad, K. Irshad, and A. M. Khan. 2020. The use of fish and herptiles in traditional folk therapies in three districts of Chenab riverine area in Punjab, Pakistan. *J Ethnobiol Ethnomed* 16(38):1-21.
- Altaf, M., A. M. Abbasi, M. Umair, M. S. Amjad, N. Muhammad, K. J. Iqbal, and A. M. Khan. 2021. The usage of freshwater fishes in cultural and folklore therapies among the people along river Jhelum, Punjab, Pakistan. *Journal of Wildlife and Ecology* 5(2):79-99.
- Altaf, M., M. Umair, A. R. Abbasi, N. Muhammad, and A. M. Abbasi. 2018a. Ethnomedicinal applications of animal species by the local communities of Punjab, Pakistan. *Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine* 14(55):1-25.
- Altaf, M., M. Umair, A. R. Abbasi, N. Muhammad, and A. M. Abbasi. 2018b. Ethnomedicinal applications of animal species by the local communities of Punjab, Pakistan. *Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine* 14(1):55.
- Alves, R., I. L. Rosa, N. A. Léo Neto, and R. Voeks. 2012. Animals for the gods: magical and religious faunal use and trade in Brazil. *Human Ecology* 40(5):751-780.
- Anderson, E. N., D. M. Pearsall, E. S. Hunn, N. J. Turner, and R. I. Ford. 2011. *Ethnobiology*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons, Inc. doi 10:9781118015872.
- Arshad, M., M. Ahmad, E. Ahmed, A. Saboor, A. Abbas, and S. Sadiq. 2014. An ethnobiological study in Kala Chitta hills of Pothwar region, Pakistan: multinomial logit specification. *J Ethnobiol Ethnomed* 10:13.
- Barros, F. B., S. A. Varela, H. M. Pereira, and L. Vicente. 2012. Medicinal use of fauna by a traditional community in the Brazilian Amazonia. *Journal of ethnobiology and ethnomedicine* 8(1):37.
- Belhabib, D., V. W. Lam, and W. W. Cheung. 2016. Overview of West African fisheries under climate change: Impacts, vulnerabilities and adaptive responses of the artisanal and industrial sectors. *Marine Policy* 71:15-28.
- Benítez, G. 2011. Animals used for medicinal and magico-religious purposes in western Granada Province, Andalusia (Spain). *Journal of ethnopharmacology* 137(3):1113-1123.
- Borah, M. P., and S. B. Prasad. 2017. Ethnozoological study of animals based medicine used by traditional healers and indigenous inhabitants in the adjoining areas of Gibbon Wildlife Sanctuary, Assam, India. *Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine* 13:1-13.
- Calvo, M. 2016. *Secretos y tradiciones mapuches: Nueva edición corregida y aumentada*. UQBAR.
- Catelani, P. A., A. C. Petry, F. M. Pelicice, and E. García-Berthou. 2021. When a freshwater invader meets the estuary: the peacock bass and fish assemblages in the São João River, Brazil. *Biological Invasions* 23(1):167-179.
- Chakravorty, J., V. B. Meyer-Rochow, and S. Ghosh. 2011. Vertebrates used for medicinal purposes by members of the Nyishi and Galo tribes in Arunachal Pradesh (North-East India). *Journal of ethnobiology and ethnomedicine* 7(1):1.

- Costa-Neto, E. M. 1998. Folk taxonomy and cultural significance of "abeia" (Insecta, Hymenoptera) to the Pankararé, Northeastern Bahia State, Brazil. *Journal of Ethnobiology* 18:1-13.
- Deb, A. K., and C. Emdad Haque. 2011. 'Every mother is a mini-doctor': Ethnomedicinal uses of fish, shellfish and some other aquatic animals in Bangladesh. *Journal of ethnopharmacology* 134(2):259-267.
- Deb, A. K., and C. E. Haque. 2011. Every mother is a mini-doctor: Ethnomedicinal uses of fish, shellfish and some other aquatic animals in Bangladesh. *Journal of ethnopharmacology* 134(2):259-267.
- Djidohokpin, G., E. Sossoukpè, R. Adandé, J. V. Voudounnou, E. D. Fiogbé, and A. Haour. 2020. Ethnoichthyology of Fishing Communities in the Lower Valley of Ouémé in Benin, West Africa. *Ethnobiology Letters* 11(1):137-151.
- Easthope, G. 1995. Ethnicity and Health. In: N. J. Macmillan, Lupton G editor, *Sociology of health and illness: Australian readings*, Sydney, Australia. p. 143-161.
- Faiz, M., M. Altaf, M. Umair, K. S. Almarry, Y. B. Elbadawi, and A. M. Abbasi. 2022. Traditional uses of animals in the Himalayan region of Azad Jammu and Kashmir. *Frontiers in Pharmacology*:1951.
- Froese, R., and D. Pauly. 2022. FishBase. [www.fishbase.org](http://www.fishbase.org). (09-01-2022).
- Gedif, T., and H.-J. Hahn. 2003. The use of medicinal plants in self-care in rural central Ethiopia. *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* 87(2-3):155-161.
- Giday, M., Z. Asfaw, and Z. Woldu. 2009. Medicinal plants of the Meinit ethnic group of Ethiopia: an ethnobotanical study. *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* 124(3):513-521.
- Grey, M., A.-M. Blais, B. Hunt, and A. C. Vincent. 2006. The USA's international trade in fish leather, from a conservation perspective. *Environmental conservation* 33(2):100-108.
- Grizzetti, B., C. Liqueste, A. Pistocchi, O. Vigiak, G. Zulian, F. Bouraoui, A. De Roo, and A. Cardoso. 2019. Relationship between ecological condition and ecosystem services in European rivers, lakes and coastal waters. *Science of the Total Environment* 671:452-465.
- Gross, D. R. 1975. Protein Capture and Cultural Development in the Amazon Basin 1. *American Anthropologist* 77(3):526-549.
- Gupta, N., A. Kanagavel, P. Dandekar, N. Dahanukar, K. Sivakumar, V. B. Mathur, and R. Raghavan. 2016. God's fishes: religion, culture and freshwater fish conservation in India. *Oryx* 50(2):244-249.
- Hassan, M., S. M. Haq, M. Majeed, M. Umair, H. A. Sahito, M. Shirani, M. Waheed, R. Aziz, R. Ahmad, and R. W. Bussmann. 2022. Traditional Food and Medicine: Ethno-Traditional Usage of Fish Fauna across the Valley of Kashmir: A Western Himalayan Region. *Diversity* 14(6):455.
- Hussain, A., M. ASHRAF, M. ALTAF, W. A. KHAN, M. Akmal, and J. Qazi. 2015. Relative diversity and threats to commercially important fishes of the Ravi, Pakistan. *Biologia*:145-149.
- Ilker, U., B. Suleyman, Y. Nurettin, and D. Yunus. 2009. The investigation and quantitative ethnobotanical evaluation of medicinal plants used around Izmir province, Turkey. *Journal of Medicinal Plants Research* 3(5):345-367.
- Iqbal, K. J., M. Umair, M. Altaf, T. Hussain, R. M. Ahmad, S. M. Z. U. Abdeen, A. Pieroni, A. M. Abbasi, S. Ali, and S. Ashraf. 2023. Cross-cultural diversity analysis: traditional knowledge and uses of freshwater fish species by indigenous peoples of southern Punjab, Pakistan. *Journal of Ethnobiology and Ethnomedicine* 19(1):1-17.
- IUCN. 2015. IUCN Freshwater Fish Specialist Group, IUCN, SSC, Wetlands International.
- Jain, S. K., P. K. Agarwal, and V. P. Singh. 2007. *Hydrology and water resources of India*. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Kerr, S. J. 1999. A survey of competitive fishing events in Ontario. Southcentral Sciences Section, Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources.
- Kinzelbach, R. 1999. Was ist Kulturzoologie? Paradigmen zur Koevolution von Mensch und Tier. *Beiträge zur Archäozoologie und Prähistorischen Anthropologie* 2:11-20.
- Kuljanishvili, T., G. Egitashvili, J. Freyhof, B. Japoshvili, L. Kalous, B. Levin, N. Mustafayev, S. Ibrahimov, S. Pipoyan, and L. Mumladze. 2020. Checklist of the freshwater fishes of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. *Journal of Applied Ichthyology* 36(4):501-514.
- Mahawar, M. M., and D. Jaroli. 2008. Traditional zootherapeutic studies in India: a review. *Journal of ethnobiology and ethnomedicine* 4(1):17.
- Mawla, F., S. Khatoon, F. Rehana, S. Jahan, M. Shelley, S. Hossain, W. M. Haq, S. Rahman, K. Debnath, and M. Rahmatullah. 2012. Ethnomedicinal plants of folk medicinal practitioners in four villages of Natore and Rajshahi districts, Bangladesh. *Am Eur J Sustain Agric* 6:406-416.
- McConnel, U. 1953. *Native arts and industries on the Archer, Kendall and Holroyd rivers, Cape York Peninsula, north Queensland*. Hassell Press.
- Mirza, M. R. 2004. *Fresh water Fishes of Pakistan*. Urdu Science Board, Pakistan.

- Mora, C., O. Aburto-Oropeza, A. Ayala Bocos, P. M. Ayotte, S. Banks, A. G. Bauman, M. Beger, S. Bessudo, D. J. Booth, and E. Brokovich. 2011. Global human footprint on the linkage between biodiversity and ecosystem functioning in reef fishes. *PLoS biology* 9(4):e1000606.
- Morales, E. M. Q., D. Lepofsky, and F. Berkes. 2017. Ethnobiology and Fisheries: Learning from the Past for the Present. *Journal of Ethnobiology* 37(3):369-379.
- Morales Muñiz, A. 2010. Inferences about prehistoric fishing gear based on archaeological fish assemblages. *Inferences about prehistoric fishing gear based on archaeological fish assemblages*:25-53.
- Muhammad, N., A. M. Khan, K. J. Iqbal, M. S. Haider, S. Ashraf, Z. S. Ansari, S. A. Chattha, A. R. Abbasi, and M. Yaqoob. 2017a. Assessment of distribution and ethnocultural uses of the Baringo tilapia (*Oreochromis niloticus*) in Punjab, Pakistan. *Journal of Wildlife and Ecology* 1(4):7-13.
- Muhammad, N., A. M. Khan, M. Umair, A. Qazi, A. M. Yaqoob, S. Ashraf, Q. Khan, and M. Farooq. 2017b. Assessment of distribution and ethnocultural uses of the Sol (*Channa marulius*) in Punjab, Pakistan. *Journal of Wildlife and Ecology* 1(2):35-41. (Research Article)
- Muhammad, N., M. Umair, A. M. Khan, A. R. Abbasi, Q. Khan, A. Khan, and M. Z. Awan. 2017c. Assessment of the diversity and ethno-medicinal uses of the carps in Punjab, Pakistan. *Journal of Wildlife and Ecology* 1(1):52-60.
- Muhammad, N., M. Umair, A. M. Khan, M. Yaqoob, S. Ashraf, M. S. Haider, S. A. Chattha, Z. S. Ansari, M. Yaqoob, and K. J. Iqbal. 2019. Statistical analysis of freshwater fishes of head Khanki, Punjab, Pakistan. *Journal of Wildlife and Ecology* 3(1):1-9.
- Muhammad, N., M. Umair, A. M. Khan, M. Yaqoob, M. S. Haider, Q. Khan, and A. R. Abbasi. 2018. Assessment of cultural uses of Mrigal carp (*Cirrhinus mrigala*) in Gujranwala division, Pakistan. *Journal of Wildlife and Ecology* 2(1):1-9.
- Mukti, M., A. Ahmed, S. Chowdhury, Z. Khatun, P. Bhuiyan, K. Debnath, and M. Rahmatullah. 2012. Medicinal plant formulations of Kavirajes in several areas of Faridpur and Rajbari districts, Bangladesh. *Am-Eur J Sustain Agr* 6:234-247.
- Naylor, R. L., R. J. Goldburg, J. H. Primavera, N. Kautsky, M. Beveridge, J. Clay, C. Folke, J. Lubchenco, H. Mooney, and M. Troell. 2000. Effect of aquaculture on world fish supplies. *Nature* 405(6790):1017-1024.
- Nelson, J. S., T. C. Grande, and M. V. Wilson. 2016. *Fishes of the World*. John Wiley & Sons.
- Neuenschwander, P., B. Sinsin, and G. Goergen. 2011. Protection de la Nature en Afrique de l'Ouest: Une Liste Rouge pour le Bénin nature conservation in West Africa: Red list for Benin. Ibadan: IITA
- Olden, J. D., J. R. Vitule, J. Cucherousset, and M. J. Kennard. 2020. There's more to Fish than Just Food: Exploring the Diverse Ways that Fish Contribute to Human Society. *Fisheries* 45(9):453-464.
- Sahrhage, D., and J. Lundbeck. 2012. *A history of fishing*. Springer Science & Business Media.
- Saikia, K., and R. Ahmed. 2012. Wetland fish biodiversity of Majuli river island (India) and their medicinal values. *The Clarion* 1(2)
- Schramm, H., and A. J. Fedler. 1991. What competitive fishing can do for fishery management. In: *Warmwater Fisheries Symposium*. p 350-356.
- Suleman, K. 1961. Food planning and preparation procedures for use in the home economics college cafeteria, Karachi, Pakistan, Oklahoma State University.
- Svanberg, I., and A. Locker. 2020. Ethnoichthyology of freshwater fish in Europe: a review of vanishing traditional fisheries and their cultural significance in changing landscapes from the later medieval period with a focus on northern Europe. *Journal of ethnobiology and ethnomedicine* 16(1):1-29.
- Svanberg, I., Ł. Łuczaj, M. Pardo-De-Santayana, A. Pieroni, and E. Anderson. 2011. History and current trends of ethnobiological research in Europe. *Ethnobiology* 191:214.
- Tacon, A. G., and M. Metian. 2009. Fishing for aquaculture: non-food use of small pelagic forage fish—a global perspective. *Reviews in Fisheries Science* 17(3):305-317.
- Tardío, J., and M. Pardo-de-Santayana. 2008. Cultural importance indices: a comparative analysis based on the useful wild plants of Southern Cantabria (Northern Spain) 1. *Economic Botany* 62(1):24-39.
- Teronpi, V., H. Singh, A. Tamuli, and R. Teron. 2012. Ethnozoology of the Karbis of Assam, India: Use of ichthyofauna in traditional health-care practices. *Ancient science of life* 32(2):99.
- Vallejo, J. R., and J. A. González. 2014a. Fish-based remedies in Spanish ethnomedicine: a review from a historical perspective. *Journal of ethnobiology and ethnomedicine* 10(1):1-31.
- Vallejo, J. R., and J. A. González. 2014b. Fish-based remedies in Spanish ethnomedicine: a review from a historical perspective. *Journal of ethnobiology and ethnomedicine* 10(1):37.
- Vitalini, S., M. Iriti, C. Puricelli, D. Ciuchi, A. Segale, and G. Fico. 2013. Traditional knowledge on medicinal and food plants used in Val San Giacomo (Sondrio, Italy)—An alpine ethnobotanical study. *Journal of Ethnopharmacology* 145(2):517-529.



Wester, L., and S. Yongvanit. 1995. Biological diversity and community lore in northeastern Thailand. Journal of Ethnobiology 15:71-88.

**Competing interests:** Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

**Funding:** Authors have no source of funding for this work.

**Authors' contributions:** Noor and Altaf have designed this project, collected data and written this article; while all authors have critically analyzed this article and approved as final.



**Table 1: Cultural data gathered from native people of study area.**

Sr.	English Name Vernacular name	Scientific name Species authority	Code	Family Order	FC
1	Gangetic mystus Keengar Catfish	<i>Mystus cavasius</i> Hamilton, 1822	GMMS	Bagridae Siluriformes	31
2	Khaga	<i>Rita rita</i> (Hamilton, 1822)	CRR	Bagridae Siluriformes	56
3	Giant river-catfish Shinghara	<i>Sperata sarwari</i> (Mirza, Nawaz & Javed, 1992)	GRCSS	Bagridae Siluriformes	34
4	Asian needlefish Kaan	<i>Xenentodon cancila</i> (Hamilton, 1822)	ANXC	Belonidae Beloniformes	31
5	Spotted snakehead Dola	<i>Channa punctata</i> (Bloch, 1793)	SSCP	Channidae Perciformes	61
6	Dwarf snakehead Doli	<i>Channa gachua</i> (Hamilton, 1822)	DSCS	Channidae Perciformes	61
7	Banded snakehead Soli	<i>Channa striata</i> (Bloch, 1793)	BSCS	Channidae Perciformes	55
8	Bullseye Snakehead Sol	<i>Channa marulius</i> (Hamilton, 1822)	BSCM	Channidae Perciformes	55
9	Blue tilapia Chirra	<i>Oreochromis aureus</i> (Steindachner, 1864)	BTOA	Cichlidae Perciformes	70
10	Black rohu Kalbaso, Kala Raho	<i>Labeo calbasu</i> (Hamilton, 1822)	BRLC	Cyprinidae Cypriniformes	56
11	Gardd carp Grass carp	<i>Ctenopharyngodon idella</i> (Valenciennes, 1844)	GCCI	Cyprinidae Cypriniformes	62
12	Aischgrund Carp Gulfam	<i>Cyprinus carpio</i> Linnaeus, 1758	ACCC	Cyprinidae Cypriniformes	62
13	Mrigal carp Mori	<i>Cirrhinus mrigala</i> (Hamilton, 1822)	MCCM	Cyprinidae Cypriniformes	55
14	Roho labeo Raho	<i>Labeo rohita</i> (Hamilton, 1822)	RLLR	Cyprinidae Cypriniformes	70
15	Goldfish Silver	<i>Carassius auratus</i> Linnaeus, 1758	GFCA	Cyprinidae Cypriniformes	31
16	Catla Thaila	<i>Catla catla</i> (Hamilton, 1822)	CCC	Cyprinidae Cypriniformes	61

17	Barred spiny eel Garoj	<i>Macrogathus pancalus</i> (Hamilton, 1822)	<i>BSEMP</i>	Mastacembelidae Cypriniformes	31
18	Asiatic knifefish Pari	<i>Notopterus notopterus</i> (Pallas, 1769)	<i>AKNN</i>	Notopteridae Osteoglossiformes	31
19	Clown knifefish Battu	<i>Chitala chitala</i> (Hamilton, 1822)	<i>CKCC</i>	Notopteridae Osteoglossiformes	31
20	Wallago Mali	<i>Wallago attu</i> (Bloch & Schneider, 1801)	<i>WWA</i>	Siluridae Siluriformes	42
21	Bagarid catfish Foji khaga	<i>Bagarius bagarius</i> (Hamilton, 1822)	<i>BCBB</i>	Sisoridae Siluriformes	59

**Table 2: Statistical analysis of Ethnopharmacological uses of fishes of River Ravi.**

English Name	Scientific name	Code	Part use	Mode of Use	Treatments	IA	RIA
Gangetic mystus	<i>Mystus cavasius</i>	GMMS	Oil	Oral	Cold, flue, vitamin D	2	0.03
Catfish	<i>Rita rita</i>	CRR	Scale, meat	Topical, oral	Antibacterial, antifungal, cough	4	0.05
Giant river-catfish	<i>Sperata sarwari</i>	GRCSS	Meat	Oral	Impotency, paralysis	7	0.09
Asian needlefish	<i>Xenentodon cancila</i>	ANXC	Oil	Oral	Cold, flue, vitamin D	2	0.03
Spotted snakehead	<i>Channa punctata</i>	SSCP	Meat	Oral	Impotency, weakness, muscle	7	0.09
Dwarf snakehead	<i>Channa gachua</i>	DSCS	Meat	Oral	Impotency, weakness, muscle	5	0.06
Banded snakehead	<i>Channa striata</i>	BSCS	Meat	Oral	Impotency, weakness, muscle	5	0.06
Bulls-eye Snakehead	<i>Channa marulius</i>	BSCM	Meat	Oral	Impotency, weakness, muscle, reduce overweight	5	0.06
Blue tilapia	<i>Oreochromis aureus</i>	BTOA	Skin	Oral	Skin burn	38	0.49
Black rohu	<i>Labeo calbasu</i>	BRLC	Meat	Oral	Cough, enhance lactation in mother	33	0.43
Gardd carp	<i>Ctenopharyngodon idella</i>	GCCI	Meat	Oral	Night blindness, reduce overweight	34	0.44
Aischgrund Carp	<i>Cyprinus carpio</i>	ACCC	Oil	Oral	Vitamin D	36	0.47
Mrigal carp	<i>Cirrhinus mrigala</i>	MCCM	Oil	Oral	Cold, flue, vitamin D	29	0.38
Roho labeo	<i>Labeo rohita</i>	RLLR	Brain	Oral	Memory, eyesight	35	0.45
Goldfish	<i>Carassius auratus</i>	GFCA	Oil	Topical, oral	Joint pain	3	0.04
Catla	<i>Catla catla</i>	CCC	Meat	Oral	Cough	4	0.05
Barred spiny eel	<i>Macrogathus pancalus</i>	BSEMP	Oil	Topical, oral	Joint pain	2	0.03
Asiatic knifefish	<i>Notopterus notopterus</i>	AKNN	Oil	Topical, oral	Joint pain	1	0.01
Clown knifefish	<i>Chitala chitala</i>	CKCC	Brain	Oral	Memory	1	0.01
Wallago	<i>Wallago attu</i>	WWA	Meat	Oral	Impotency	1	0.01
Bagarid catfish	<i>Bagarius bagarius</i>	BCBB	Bile	Oral	Cancer	9	0.12

**Note:** IA (Informants of ailment), RIA (relative abundance of Informants of ailment)