

AN INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH ON MEDICINAL BENEFITS THROUGH TRADITIONAL TAMIL CUISINE

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ABSTRACT:

Man's basic drive is for food to satisfy his hunger. The fundamental drive for food is a primal force that underpins human existence, intimately linked to the physical, economic, psychological, intellectual and social dimensions of life. Beyond mere sustenance, food carries deep cultural meanings and symbolisms, evolving with individuals across different life stages. One of the most fundamental needs for human survival is food, even more so than clothing or shelter. By supplying essential nutrients such as carbohydrates, proteins, lipids, vitamins, minerals, and water, it promotes the human body's growth, development, maintenance, and repair. In this regard, Tamil Nadu's traditional culinary culture serves as an example of how nutrition, cultural customs, and medical practices are closely related. Rich in herbs, spices, and whole foods with therapeutic properties, Tamil Nadu's culinary practices harness ingredients like turmeric, ginger, curry leaves, tamarind, and fenugreek to offer anti-inflammatory, antioxidant, digestive and immune-boosting benefits. Furthermore, staples such as lentils and coconut contribute to heart health, blood sugar regulation and holistic well-being. Closely aligned with Ayurvedic principles, Tamil Nadu's traditional dietary practices emphasize balance and the use of natural, locally sourced ingredients, providing a sustainable, preventative approach to chronic disease management and promoting overall health. Hence, this present paper highlights how traditional Tamil food systems can serve as powerful vehicles for both nourishment and natural healing. This study made an attempt to analyze nutritive value of common Tamil foods and its ingredients and also attempt to explore the various welfare schemes implemented by central as well as state government in order to achieve Zero Hunger policy, which is one of main goal of sustainable Development Goals. For this study both analytical as well as interpretative methodologies are adopted.

Key words: Tamil Cuisine, Medical Benefits, Thirukural, concept of food, schemes.