

7<sup>th</sup> International Conference on

## BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

July 26-27, 2018 Melbourne, Australia



## Mini N Vijayan

Carmel College of Arts, Science &amp; Commerce for Women, India

### Two golden grains from the treasure trove of rich Indian traditions

This research paper is an outcome in part of studying plant biodiversity in some cultural practices of a specific community; the Kerala Brahmin community, who got settled in Indian Peninsula centuries ago. Literature in this regard is sparse and genuine efforts for documentation were not much. With this background, studies are in progress to understand, enlist, document and preserve the plant biodiversity related to the customary practices of the said community. The author herself being a member of the community, her own experiences and a book written in vernacular language; 'Antherjanangalude aacharanushtanangal' (Customary rituals and religious rites observed by women of Brahmin community, 2002) by Late Smt. Cheruvakkara Parvathy Antherjanam and discussions with the elders in the community have formed the basis of this research. The golden grains mentioned here are two tropical grass species locally known in vernacular language as Navara and Chama. Navara is an exclusive and ancient variety of rice, *Oryza sativa* and *Chama*, *Panicum sumatrense*, popularly called as Little millet. Navara rice has been in cultivation in the state of Kerala (India) for about 2500 years since the time of Susruta, the Indian pioneer in medicine and surgery. Both these grains are intricately linked to the socio-cultural aspects of the community and have great therapeutic value. Lifestyle changes combined with erratic climate have adversely affected the cultivation of Navara and Chama. A study of the cultural aspects and a review of the high nutritional and therapeutic values are stated in this paper which are aimed at creating awareness with reference to the agricultural crops in question. The study proclaims the need to preserve locale specific ancient traditions which are both eco-friendly and sustainable for conserving biodiversity and combating climate change issues. Most significantly the research paper enlightens the role of cultural ethos in safe guarding the plant biodiversity of a region.

### Biography

Mini N Vijayan is an Associate Professor from the Department of Botany, Carmel College of Arts, Science & Commerce for Women, Goa, India. She has a Doctorate degree in Plant Anatomy and a Postgraduate Diploma in Ecology and Environment. She is passionate about biodiversity concerns and is presently documenting plant diversity in cultural practices of a specific indigenous community of Indian Peninsula.

[vjuminibappatta@gmail.com](mailto:vjuminibappatta@gmail.com)

### Notes: