

# Socio-Cultural Dynamics of Fermented Beverages among Bison Horn Maria of the Bastar Region, Chhattisgarh

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## Abstract

*Among Bison Horn Maria, usage of fermented beverages is obligatory in celebration of Nelavator (childbirth), Pendul (marriage), Doltor (death), annual rituals and construction of memorial pillars, etc. Of the locally available beverages, indigenous ones like Suram and Mahuwa (country liquor made with Madhuca Latifolio), Landa (Rice-beer), and Sulfi (Sap extracts from Caryotaurens) are important ones not only from the economic point of view but from socio-cultural, political and religious aspects too. Against this backdrop, the present study documents the indigenous beverages including their process and preparation. Further, an attempt is also made to understand the socio-cultural dynamics of the beverages in the life of Bison Horn Maria and their role in ensuring alternative livelihoods during exigencies.*

**Keywords:** Beverages, Mahuwa, Landa, Sulfi, rites and rituals, ceremonies, offerings, and livelihoods

## Introduction

Health and nutrition are catalytic for the development of any nation, state, region, or individual. Keeping this in mind, our ancestors had developed culture-specific foods and beverages that are rich in vitamins, minerals, probacteria, and micro-nutrients and made them part of our diet ceremonially. Since ancient times, tribal communities rely on traditional fermented foods and beverages to a great extent as they are made with locally available natural resources. Fermentation is one of the oldest methods of preservation of excess food for consumption in the lean period (Jeyram, 2008). But with the contact of modernity, the present generations mostly eat processed junk foods and beverages made with refined sugar. As a result, people are vulnerable to diet-related non-communicable diseases, raised blood pressure, obesity, and malnutrition. Globally, 2.2 billion adults are overweight of which 40.8% represent women. Similarly, 570.8 million girls and women of reproductive age

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