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MEDICINAL VALUE OF FOREST PLANT SEEDS IN OGUN STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examines the value of some forest plant seeds for the treatment of various ailments in Ogun state, Nigeria. The study area was divided into four ethnic groups namely Egba, Yewa, Remo and Ijebu. The two major markets were selected in each group for questionnaire administration. In all, thirty respondents were interviewed by means of structured questionnaire. The result revealed that forest

plant seeds have been used for the treatment of various ailments such as pile, worm (ascaris) infections, yellow fever, cough, and fibroid. The corresponding local names of the forest seeds were checked up in Gbile (1984). Further research is however needed to investigate and document other possible uses of the forest plant seeds.

Introduction

No one knows where or when plants first began to be used in the treatment of disease, but the connection between plants and health has existed for thousands of years. An accidental discovery of some new plant food or juice that eased pain or relieved fever might have been the beginning of folk knowledge, which was passed down for generations and eventually became foundation of medicine (Estelle and Karen, 1999). In the United States of America, herbal remedies are offered to as homeopathic remedies.

All such remedies, because these are offered for treatment of a disease, are regarded as drugs. This means that if a herbal remedy is included in the United States Pharmacopoeia or the National Formulary, it will be recognized officially as a drug, if it does appear in any of these official compilations, it will still remain a drug but not

an officially recognized drug (Grewal, 2003). Just as many Europeans knew of the use of Aloe vera (Alloaceae) to treat burns, many indigenous people in Nigeria also know some common plants that have medicinal value. Herbalists and native doctors in Nigeria value all plants in their garden and do not consider any as weeds (Adekunle and Sam-Wobo, 2004, Gbile, 1987). The investigation carried out by Adekunle and Sam-wobo (2004) revealed that *Chenopodium ambrosioides*, *Cuscuta australis* and *Plumbago zeylanica* among others have been used effectively for the treatment of Guinea Worm (*Dracunculus medinensis*) infection in Ogun State, Nigeria. Also Adebisi (1999) has reported that *Phyllanthus amarus*, *Enantia chlorantha*, *Solenostemon monstachyus*, *Carica papaya* and *Paaqualina nigrescens* have been found effective in treating malaria fever in the south Western Nigeria. Medicine used by the majority of the population of most developing countries originated from

medicinal plants (WHO/UCN/WWF,1988). Large segment-estimates are 80% of the population of developing countries- depends on traditional plant medicines (World Bank, 2001). Traditional medicine is particularly relevant for the poor, many of whom cannot access and afford the cost of allopathic (conventional) medicines (Lengkeek, 2004, Adebisi and Gbagir, 2006). This study therefore investigates in the traditional uses of forest plants seeds for the treatment of various ailments in Ogun State, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

The study area

The study area is Ogun State, Nigeria. It was divided into four sub-ethnic group viz: Egba, Yewa, Remo, and Ijebu. The vegetation of these areas is that of rain forest with uniform distribution of rain fall throughout the year with two peaks. The temperature ranges between 23°C and 27 °C.

and averaging 22°C. The people are Yorubas and they are mainly farmers and traders.

Data Collection

Two major markets were purposively selected from each sub-ethnic group: Egba. (Itoku and Lafenwa). Yewa (Tube and Agosasa), Remo (Iperu and Isara). Ijebu area was excluded for logistic reasons. Based on the limited number of traders selling forest plant seeds, one hundred percent selection was done in all the selected markets in the sub-ethnic group. In all, thirty respondents were interviewed by means of structured questionnaire. The corresponding local names of the forest seeds were checked up in Gbile (1984).

Data analysis

Simple statistical method of analysis was used in the presentation and interpretation of data collected. The statistical methods include frequency distribution, tables, percentages and mode.

Result and Discussion

Table I: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents Socio-economic

Variable	Frequency	% of total	Mode.
Gender			
Male	3	11.1	
Female	27	89.9	Female
Age class			
L 20	0	0	
21-30	4	13.3	
31-40	5	16.7	
41-50	12	40	41-50
51-60	6	20	
> 60	3	10	
Educational status			
No form 1 education	15	50	No formal education
Primary	10	33.4	
Secondary	4	13.3	
Tertiary	1	0.3	

It is evident from table I that traders in medicinal forest plant seeds are dominated by the female gender as represented by 89.9%. This is more 8 times the percentage of males engaged in the business. The observation that most of the marketers were females showed that women are more involved in herb preparation business hence their involvement in the marketing. They go as far as recommending the different forest

seeds combination according to the disease and ailments. The fewer males (11.1%) could probably be that they are more involved in identification and sourcing of herbs from the forest therefore leaving the business of herb marketing almost entirely to the women. The age distribution pattern showed older people mostly females in the age bracket 41-60 years are actively involved and for the bulk in business. This

showed that they have a lot of dependants to care for in their various families most of the respondents (50%) have no formal education. This could have serious implication on the already degraded forest

resources, as they believe that these natural resources are free gift of nature.

Table 2: Medicinal Uses of Forest Plant Seeds

SVN	BOTANICALNAM E	COMMON Name	FAMILY	EGBA	REMO	YEWA
1	<i>Annona senegalensis pers.</i>	Abo	Annonaceae	For treating rashes; Grind and mix with soap for bathing.		
2	<i>Nauclea latifolia sm.</i>	Egbesi	Rubiaceae	For treating malaria fever; Grind and mix with water and drink. For treating swollens Grind and mix with soap for bathing.		
3	<i>Ficus sur forssk.</i> Syn. <i>Ficus capensis Tumb</i>	Opoto	Moraceae	For blood tonic, Cook the bark and drink	The seed is used as poison.	
4	<i>Treculia Africana</i>	Afon	Moraceae	For treating pile soak in water and drink	Use as bait for catching snail	
5	<i>Chrysophyllum delevoyi De Wild</i> Syn. <i>Gambeya africana(Bak)</i> <i>Pierre</i>	Baka	Sapotaceae	For treating gonorrhoea; Also for treating fibroid. Grind, mix with water and potash or alcohol and potash and drink		
6	<i>Chrysophyllum albidum C. Dlon</i> syn. <i>Gambeya Albida (C.Don)</i> <i>Aubrev & Fellegr</i>	Agbalumo	Sapotaceae	For easy separation of cord of newly born baby, Grind the cotyledon and mix with shea butter oil. Add to nerve cord of baby. Also used by pregnant women for healthy growth of baby, used for preparing soup.		
7	<i>Jatropha curcas</i>	Botuje	Euphorbiaceae	For treating boil, Grind the cotyledon and mix with shea butter oil. Put the mixture on the surface of the boil. It will dissolve after two days		

8	<i>Abrus precatorius</i>	Ojuologbo, omisiminsi	Leguminosae	Used by traveler swallow one seed with water so that he will not die in case of accident.		As bullet proof, eat nine seed of atare(Aframomum melegueta) and nine seed of ojuologbo(Abrus precatorius) together
SN	BOTANICALNAM E	COMMON Name	FAMILY	EGBA	REMO	YEWA
9	<i>Triumfetta rhomboidea jacoq</i>	Epa roro, Epa foo	Tiliaceae	Used by pregnant woman with problem in given birth; Grind and cook with fish...Catfish (Aro)		
10	<i>Lagenaria breviflora</i> (Benth.) Roberty Syn. <i>Adenopus breviflorus</i> Benth and <i>A. ledermanii</i> * <i>Crinum glaucum</i> * <i>Crinum jagun</i>	Tagiiri Isumeri Odede-odo	Cucurbitaceae	For treating cold; Peel and cook with *Ogede odo and *Isumeri then drink. Also for preventing measules, just throw it inside the used to keep away 'asin'	For treating Coccodiosis in birds. Cut into smaller siz es and soak in water. Allow the birds to drink.	
11	<i>Allium sativum</i> L. <i>Citrullus lunatus</i> (Thumb.) Mansf.	Ayuu	Alliaceae	For treating stomach pain and ascaries, soak in water and drink.	For treating running stomach and pile. Soak in water and drink.	
12	<i>Citrullus lunatus</i> Mansf. Syn. <i>Colocynthis citrulus</i> (Linn) O. Kize <i>Cassia tora</i> <i>Chrysophyllum delevoyi</i>	Baara Epa-Ikun Baka	Cucurbitaceae	For treating gonorrhea; Peeland add to epa ikun, baka and Potash then eat.	For treating gonorrhea. Cut the "Bara" into pot + Potash + Omidum (water on top of grinded maize) + heat	
13	<i>Tetrapleura tetraptera</i> (Schum. & Thonn.) Tanb	Aridan Aidan	Leguminosae: Mimosoideae		Oil is extracted from it for rubbing swollen part of body	For treating rheumatism. Grind and rub the affected part.
14	<i>Hexalobus Crispiflorus</i> A. Rich.	Apara	Annaraceae	For treating malaria fever cook and drink		
15	<i>Croton lobatus</i> L.	Eru	Euphorbiaceae	For treating body rashes, cook and drink also bath with it		Use for cooking soup. For making cream. For treating rheumatism, Grind and mix with fried palm oil and rub the swollen part
16	<i>Dialium guineense</i> willd.	Ayin, Ewe iko	Leguminosae Caesolpinoide ae			For treating cough. Eat the leaf
17	<i>Momordica charantia</i>	Ejiren	Cucurbitaceae		When Pregnant woman has problem (delay) in delivery, the seed is mix with soap and use to bath the woman.	

18	<i>Glyphee</i> <i>a brevis</i> .	Atori	Leguminosae			Used by pregnant woman for healthy growth of the baby in the womb. Grind the seed and fish together and eat
SN	BOTANICALNAM E	COMMON Name	FAMILY	EGBA	REMO	YEWA
19	<i>Carica papaya</i> Linn	Pawpaw	Caricaceae			For treating or Preventing yellow fever in new born babies. Soak the black seed in water and give to the child to drink
20	<i>Adansonia digitata</i>	Ose	Bombacaceae			To bring propensity and happiness. Grind the seed and fish together, and then eat.

Conclusion

This study on forest plant seeds presents vital information that will find much use by rural and urban dwellers, practitioners, or researchers interested or engaged in the development, **Adebisi** evaluation, or use of the herbal medicines. It is expected that this research work will help readers to find a wealth of practical ideas and theoretical information that will expose a new horizons and little-known facts as well as their significant applications thereby help the masses to become healthier people.

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