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ETHNOBOTANICAL SURVEY AND UTILISATION OF MEDICINAL PLANTS IN IJEBU-ODE METROPOLIS, OGUN STATE.

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ABSTRACT

Investigations into this survey revealed some of the medicinal herbs utilized for treatment of some ailments by people of Ijebu-ode metropolis located in Ogun state, Nigeria. This ethnobotanical survey of some medicinal plants carried out in Ijebu ode enumerates the plants and plant parts such as stem, leaves, root and bark used to cure different ailments. A total of 51 plant species were highlighted for treatment of 17 different ailments. The study revealed that 22.2% of these plants are employed in curing rheumatism, 15.8% are employed in curing malaria fever, 7.9% and 9.5% are used in curing fontanelle anddiabetes respectively which clearly unveils percentage frequencies of herbs used in treatment of ailments in the study area. This study investigated wide range of medicinal plants used by Ijebu ode people to cure ailments. It implies our forests serve as homes to many medicinal plants with curative abilities for a lot of ailments.

KEYWORDS: *Medicinal plants, ailments, herbs, trado-medical practice, plant parts, Ijebu-ode.*

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INTRODUCTION

The use of medicinal plants dates back to the time of the early man who used herbs to cure a number of diseases and enhance his living condition. These medicinal plants have been adopted overtime in the treatment of ailments and diseases (Tapsell*et al*, 2006). It is undeniable that Nigerians use medicinal plants for treatment of ailments based on beliefs, cost implication and effectiveness. The World Health Organization (WHO) estimates that 4 billion people, or 80 percent of the world's population, use herbal medicine for some aspect of primary health care.

Cox and Balick (1996) made it known thatthe ethnomedicinal uses of plants is one of the most successful criteria used by the pharmaceutical industry in finding new therapeutic agents for the various fields of biomedicine. Many of these medicinal plants used to improve wellbeing are majorly sourced from natural forest which implies the forest serves as homes for many medicinal plants.

These medicinal plants are now endangered due to destructive forest activities in most parts of Nigeria. This necessitates an ethnobotanical survey to document extensively and create record for these medicinal plants in order to prevent loss of knowledge of their parent plants which serves as sources for different plant parts employed in the treatment of diverse human diseases. Population increase on a daily basis leads to increase in demands for traditional herbal medicine, increase in demand for plant produce and products; and also the enormous use of floral species in the pharmaceutical companies all result in the threatening of floral species. Without these plants, the availability of herbs for the treatment of ailments is threatened.

People consider the forest as a gift of nature which has grossly affected the natural forest negatively. This belief encourages them to enter freely into the forest to engage in felling of trees of different plant species available in the natural forest resulting in depletion of our flora that mantle the earth. Continuous depletion of the natural forest is envisaged to have negative effects on generations unborn as a result of loss of important plant species and their knowledge. Therefore, documentation of these medicinal plants will make available the knowledge of medicinal plants and their uses in Nigeria and the world as a whole.

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METHODOLOGY

The survey was carried out in Ijebu-ode town situated around 6.82˚North of latitude, and 3.92˚East of longitude and 68 metres elevation above the sea level. Ijebu ode has about 209,175 inhabitants by population estimation (Most Complex maps for all cities in the world, 2011). A total of 100 respondents consisting of herbalists, herb sellers and traditional medical practitioners were interviewed from renowned markets where herbs are sold in Ijebu-ode. Numerous visits were made to the two major markets of the city namely; OkeAje and ItaOsu markets and other suburb markets. These suburb markets includes; Imepe, Italapo and Isiwo markets.

Interviews with herb sellers, trado-medical practitioners and consumers were carried out in these markets and some healing homes using structured questionnaires. These markets were considered because they are the notable markets where medicinal plant parts displayed are exchange for money to achieve desired economic satisfaction.

The herbs used for treating ailments were identified by the herb sellers by supplying their vernacular names while the scientific names were gathered from Gbile and Soladoye (2002), Nigerian trees Volume II (R.W. Keay et. al.1964) and the internet. Information gathered were analyzed and tabulated giving botanical names, common names, families, parts used and ailments cured.

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RESULT AND DISCUSION

The demographic analysis revealed as presented in Table 1 that72% of the informants were females while 28% were male. It also showed that 57% were married, 18% were singles, 13% were divorced and 12% were widows. The data further revealed the occupation of the respondents showing, 51% were herb sellers, 32% were involved in trado-medical practices and 17% were herbalist. Also, the age distribution showed 39% were in between age 46 and 64, 26% were between age 31 and 45, 22% were above 65 years and 13% were between 18 and 30.

Furthermore, the study evinced that knowledge of the respondents about ethnobotany is influenced by their family background as most of them inherited knowledge of these herbs from parents or dead relatives.Suffness and Douros (1979) affirmed this that knowledge of herbal treatment was mainly acquired either by ancestral means or by training or both

The data collected indicate that various plant parts at varying frequency were employed in the treatment of different ailments. Table 1 reveals the Botanical, family and local names, plant parts used and ailment cured by plant species identified by the respondents. Table 2 shows a total of 51 plant species used for treatment of 17 ailments. The pie chart depicts 22.2% of these plants cure Rheumatism, 15.8% cures malaria fever, 7.9% cure Fontanelle, 9.5% cure diabetes. Apparently, Ijebu people employ the use ofmedicinal herbs in the treatment of ailment and diseases which are majorly sourced from the wild. The use of phytomedicinals is an alternative technique of accessing healthcare. This justifies the highpatronageexperienced in the sales of these herbs because it is cheap and available. Other factors influencing its high patronage include potency and efficacy. It is believed tobe an effective therapy and cure permanently.This gives credence to the fact thatmost forests are bombarded with harvest of herbs resultinginto over exploitation and extinction of some tree species.

It is evident that productions of some synthetic drugs are formulated with the use of extracts from medicinal plants.Drug discovery from medicinal plants has mainly relied on biological activity guided isolation methods which have led to the discovery of important drugs (Lahlou, 2007). Clinical, pharmacological, and chemical studies of these traditional medicines,

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which were derived predominantly from plants, were the basis of most early medicines such as aspirin, digitoxin, morphine, quinine, and pilocarpine (Butler, 2004).More research should be carried out on Phytomedicinalsso as to exploit the potentials embedded in them serving as a key to production of future medicines. This is also in conformity with the findings of Kunle*et al.* (2012) that plant materials are used throughout the developed and developing world as home remedies, in over-the-counter drug products, and as raw material for the pharmaceutical industry, and they represent a substantial proportion of the global drug market.

Apparently, herbal medicine has prevailed adopted in third world counties and more civilized countries. It is important to work on standardizing the dosage to give it a face lift and reduce the censure from different sources which is a major disadvantage. Kunle*et al*., (2012) confirmed this that though herbal products have become increasingly popular throughout the world, one of the impediments in its acceptance is the lack of standard quality control profile. Thus, further research work on standardizing the dosage of these medicinal herbs is essential. Also, proper storage will help retain the curative properties and also retain their physical features asthere is no known side effect attributed to the use of phytomedicinals. Our medical health practitioners should also focus attention on more intense research on medicinal plants which can save the life our people without side effects (Soladoye*et al*., 2010)

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CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In conclusion, we can attribute the development of modern day medicine to the practice and use of medicinal herbs. This practice has helped manage families financially which simply implies that it serves as a source of survival for some traditional health practitioners. Trado-medical healers have been secretive about knowledge of herbs used in treatment of ailments in the time past which resulted in loss of some knowledge, methods and the ingredients used in preparation of some of these herbal portions. Nevertheless, proper record of these valuable plants should be kept to serve as baseline for further investigation into qualitative and quantitative analysis of phytochemical properties of these highlighted herbs.

Table1. Demographic Analysis of Respondents

Parameters	**Variables**	**Percentage (%)**
Occupation	Herb sellers	51
	Trado-medical Practitioners	32
	Herbalist	17
Age	18-30	13
	31-45	26
	46-64	39
	65 and above	22
Marital Status	Married	57
	Single	18
	Divorced	13
	Widowed	12
Sex	Female	72

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	Male	28

Table2. Common Names, Botanical names and Families of Medicinal Plants

	Common Names	**Yoruba Names**	**Botanical Names**	***Family***	**Part Used**	**Ailment Cured**
1	Siam weed	Akintola	*Chromolaena odorata*	*Asteraceae*	Root, leaves and stem	Rheumatism, Malaria, Typhoid, Skin disease, stomach disorder
2		Mawole	*Hippocratea species*	*Celastraceae*	Root	Typhoid
3		Opoto	*Ficuscapensis*	*Moraceae*	Bark	Blood tonic
4		Rira	*Detariummicrocarpum*	*Fabaceae*	Bark	Stomach disorder in babies and diarrhoea
5	Stinkant forest	Ifon	*Olaxsubscorpioidea*	*Olacaceae*	Root	Fontanelle(soft spot on babies head)

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6	African Walnut	Asala	*Plukenetiaconophora*	*Euphorbiaceae*	leaves	Fontanelle(soft spot on babies head)
7	African cucumber	Ejinrin	*MomordicaCharantia*	*Cucurbitaceae*	leaves	Diabetes, Pile
8	Mango	Mangoro	*Mangiferaindica*	*Anarcardiaceae*	Bark, leaves	Malaria, Jaundice
9		Osu-igan			Bark	Hypertension
10		Asofeyeje	*Rauvolfiavomitoria*	*Apocynaceae*	Bark, root and leaves	Skin Disease
11	Affrica coffee	Rere	*Sennaoccidentalis*	*Fabaceae*	Bark	Typhoid
12	Lemon grass	Ewe tea	*Cymbopoqoncitratus*	*Poaceae*	Leaves	Maleria fever

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13	Ginger	Ata-ile	*Zingiberofficinale*	*Zingiberaceae*	Fruit	Malaria, Sinus
14	Hennaplant	Laali	*Lawsoniainermis*	*Lythraceae*	leaves	Malaria, Sinus
15	Worm seed plant	Arupale	*Dysphaniambrosioides*	*Amaranthaceae*	Root	Arthritis
16	Bitter cola	Orogbo	*Garcinia kola*	*Clusiaceae*	Fruit	Erectile disfunction, Cough
17	African never die	Abamoda	*Bryophyllum pinnatum*	*Crassulaceae*	leaves	Stroke
18	Pignut	Awogbaarun	*Jatrophacurcas*	*Euphorbiaceae*	Root	Diabetes
19	Cluster pear	Gbogbonise	*Uvariaafzelii*	*Annonaceae*	Root	Diabetes, Cancer
20	Alligator pepper	Atare	*Aframomum melegueta*	*Zingiberaceae*	Fruit	Erectile disfunction
21	Bitter leaf	Ewuro	*Vernoniaamygdalina*	*Asteraceae*	leaves	Diabetes, Hypertension

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22	Scent leave	Efinrin	*Ocimumgratissimum*	*Lamiaceae*	leaves	Diarrhoea
23	Mahogany	Oganwo	*Khayaivorensis*	*Meliaceae*	Root, leaves and bark	Maleria fever
24	Stool wood	Ahun	*Alstoniaboonei*	*Apocynaceae*	Leaves, root and bark	Malaria
25		Igbesi/ Igberi	*Dennettiatripetala*	*Annonaceae*	Leaves, root and bark	Malaria
26		Oro	*Irvingiagabonensis*	*Irvingiaceae*	Bark	Malaria
27	African yellow wood	Awopa	*Enantiachlorantha*	*Annonaceae*	Bark	Malaria

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Table3.A list of ailments and number of plants used to cure ailments in Ijebu Ode

Ailments	Number of plants used
Rheumatism	14
Malaria	10
Diabetes	6
Fontanelle	5
Cancer	4
Stomach disorder	3
Blood Tonic	5
Diarrhea	1
Hypertension	2

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Erectile dysfuction	2
Stroke	1
Skin disease	2
Typhoid	3
Pile	1
Arthritis	1
Cough	1
Sinus	2
TOTAL	63

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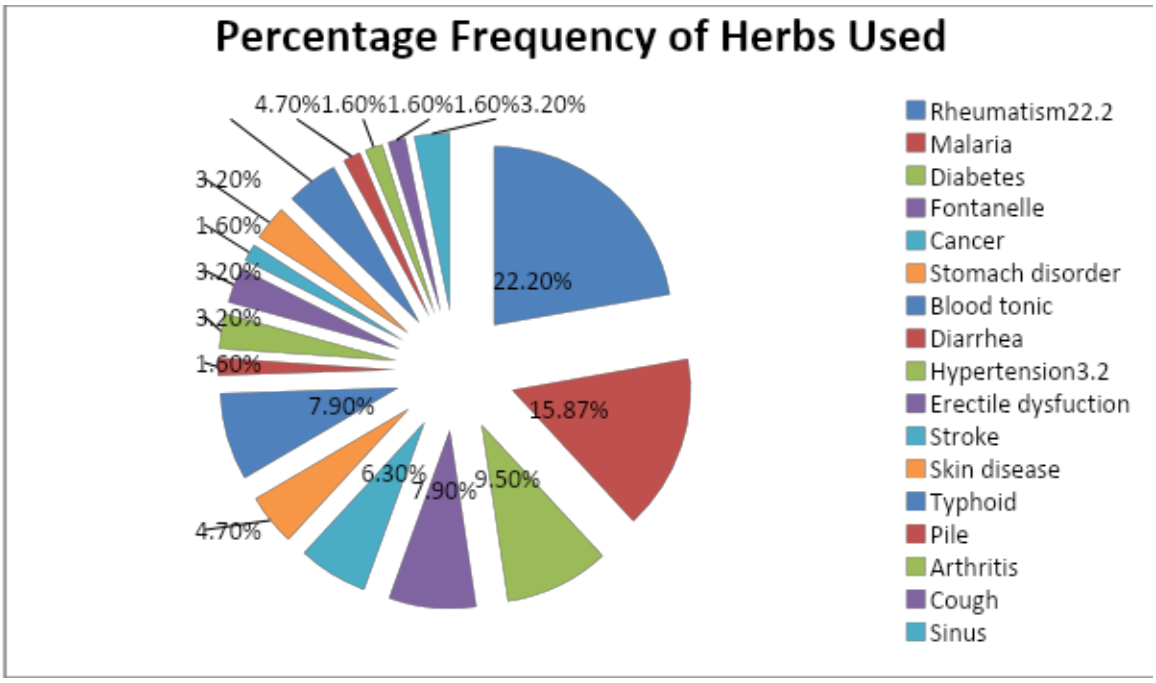
Chart:



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