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Presentation modified, plant name actualized

# Studies of Plants Used in Ethnomedicine in Ethiope Council Area of Delta State, Nigeria

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**Abstract**: Studies were carried out to inventorize, assess and document plant species and plant products used in etlmornedicine by the indigenous people of Ethiope Council Area, Delta State Nigeria. The studies revealed that a total of 53 species spread into 31 angiosperrn farnilies were used traditionally for various rnedicinal purposes. The studies further revealed that the indigenous people have developed various ways of identifying, harvesting, processing, storing and administering preparations from these plants. It was also observed that the cultivation and conservation of these plants is receiving increased attention by the people. The relevance of these observations in the efforts towards documenting indigenous knowledge and use of plants especially in the area of traditional health care system is discussed.

**Key words**: Etlmornedicine, indigenous people, Ethiope Council

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## Introduction

The attempt by mankind to use plants and plant products to cure diseases and relieve physical suffering is as old as creation (Murne, 1973; Baker, 1976; Mirutse et al., 2003). Indigenous peoples in all ages had some knowledge of plants and through systernatic trial and error approach applied them to various uses. Thus the earliest atternpts at use of plants for medicines were based on speculation.

ln fact most tribes believe that diseases were due to the presence of evil spirits in the body and could be driven out only by the use of poisonous or disagreeable substances calculated to make the body unpleasant place in which to rernain (Mirutse et al., 2003). These authors reported that this primitive era was followed by the period of the herbalists and encyclopaedists, which propagated the doctrine of plant signatures as a means to cure illnesses.

African traditional healing system, also known as folk medicine, native medicine, herbalmedicine and ethno medicine have received appreciable attention (Sofowora, 1982, 1984; Gbile, 1986; Gill, 1992; Idu and Olorunfemi, 2000; Louwi et al., 2002). The extensive literature on the subject indicates clearly that traditional medicine practice occupies a very prominent place in the treatment of diseases in the African culture.

The administration of the native or traditional drugs has been in the hands of native herbalists who are quite often old people in the rural settings. According to the history of Nigeria traditional rnedicine (Gill and Akinrnurni, 1986), thousand of plant species have been used for centuries in the practice of herbalism and our herbalists for their presumed pharmacological properties know rnany ofthern.

There is palpable anxiety across the globe that with the passage of time, these old people die without transferring this vital knowledge to future generation who are mistakenly engrossed with modemity (Cunningham, 1994).

The present work is part of a response to seek ways of rapidly capturing information on ethnomedicinal practices and uses of plant species the indigenous people of Ethiope Council in Delta State of Nigeria.

## Materials and Methods

This study was based on interviews with local herbal practitioners based in five major villages namely Eku, Abraka, Oria, Okpara and Orerokpe, which make up Ethiope Council (Fig. 1). Different categories of people were visited and interviewed on the types of medicinal plants used in the area  Also, their local names were noted. Herbalists, traditional healers and elderly people who had some knowledge of the medicinal values of plants were mostly interviewed.

Specifie questions such as plant parts used., dosage, preparation of drug and ailment cured were asked and the information obtained and recorded,

The plants were identified using floras and books covering the area including those of Akobundu and Agyakwa (1987) and Gill (1988).

Voucher specimens of all the plant used were collected, processed and deposited in the University of Benin Herbariurn.

## Results

The studies observed that a total of 53 plant species distributed into 31 angiosperm families were used for varying ethnomedicinal purposes in the study area. The record of information on the 53 species including their botanical names, family names, local names and parts used, dosage and biodynamic properties are further enumerated

Botanical name: Dracaena mannii Baker — Family: Dracaenaceae
Local name: orie-erivwin
Part used: Leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This is used to cure different kinds of ailment. Leaf is crushed in water; the juice extracted is cooked with rabbit or squirrel. The dose taken is usually different depending on the kind of ailment

Botanical name: Sansevieria liberica Gérôme & Labroy — Family: Dracaenaceae
Common name: Bowstring hemp — Local name: erevwen-eban
Part used: Leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration This plant is used to treat asthma and sexual weakness. The fresh leaf is boiled along with uririe (alligator pepper), allowed to cool and a cupful of the filtrate is taken twice daily.

Botanical name: Achyranthes aspera L.. — Family: Amaranthaceae
Common name: Devil's horsewhip — Local name: irie
Part used: Leave
Ailment cured and mode of administration: It is used to hasten delayed labour and stomach disorders. The leaf is washed with uririe (alligator pepper) and used to rub the tummy of the pregnant woman. This is every effective and almost immediately the baby comes out. This is taken once daily and used to treat stomach disorders. When taken too much it can cause abortion.

Botanical name: Amaranthus spinosus L. — Family: Amaranthaceae
Common name: Prickly amaranthus — Local name: iseruen
Part used: Leaves
Ailment cured and mode of administration: This is used to treat abdominal pains, throat and mouth ulcers. The decoction of the leaf is prepared with one tablespoon of salt. A glass of the mixture is taken three times daily for 3 days.

Botanical name: Mangifera indica L. — Family: Anacardiaceae
Commnon name: Mango — Local name: Imagolo
Part used: Stem bark, leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration This is used to treat malaria, diarrhoea and diabetes. The stern bark and leaves along with the bark of Alstonia boonei, fallen leaves of Carica papaya Azardirachta indica and Morinda lucida boiled and drank thrice daily for three to four days against malaria.. The powder of young leaves is used to treat diarrhoea and diabetes. The smoke from the burning leaves is inhaled for hiccup and throat disease. The ash from the leaf is used to treat burns.

Botanical name: Dennettia tripetala Baker f. — Family: Annonaceae
Common name: Pepper fruit — Local name: Imako
Part used: Leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration This is used to treat fever. Fresh leaves are boiled along with the leaves of mango plants. It is taken twice daily for three days.

Botanical name: Xylopia aethiopica (Dunal) A. Rich. Family: Annonaceae
Common name:Ethopian Pepper Local name: Urheri
Part used: Leaves, stem bark, fruit
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to treat eczema (skin diseases), cough. The leaf and stem bark are dried and made into powdered form. Palm oil is added to the powder, mixed and applied to the infected places. The opened dried fruit without seed is burnt, grounded into powder and mixed with palm oil. This is used to treat cough. One table spoon is recommended twice daily.

Botanical name: Alstonia boonei De Willd Farnily: Apocynaceae
Local name: Ukpukuhu
Part used: Root and stem bark
Ailment cured and mode of administration: This is used to treat swollen foot. The bark of the root and stem is pounded, uhie (a dye) added and the mixture is rubbed on the swollen foot twice daily until the foot comes down.

Botanical name: Aspilia africana (Pers.) C.A. Adams Family: Asteraceae
Common name:Haemorrhage plant Local name: Isahrasa
Part used: Leaves
Ailment cured and mode of administration: It is used to stop internal bleeding. The leaf is boiled, the leaf together with the decoction is put in a basin and a woman who is suffering from internal bleeding sit on it and this stops the bleeding. This is done in the morning and evening.

Botanical name: Chromolaena odorata (L.) R.M.King & H.Rob. Farnily: Asteraceae
Common name: Siam weed; awolowo weed. Local name: Ishero
Part used: Leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration :This is used to treat toothache. The leaf is chewed and this helps to relieve the pain and also treat the toothache. This is done for three days.

Botanical name: Emilia sonchifolia (L.) DC. Family: Asteraceae
Cornmon name: Yellow tassel flower Local name: Orho-Orua
Part used; Leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This is used to treat throat infections, clear the eyes and help children walk. Juice from the fresh leaves is used to clear the eyes. The leaf with guinea corn and limejuice is used to treat sore throat. The leaf extract is rubbed on the limbs of children to make them walk.

Botanical name: Synedrella nodiflora Gaertn. Family: Asteraceae
Local name: ogbugho
Part used; Leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to stop bleeding. The juice from the leaf is applied to fresh cuts and wounds to stop bleeding.

Botanical name: Vernonia amygdalina Delile — Family: Asteraceae
Cornmon narne: Bitter leaf — Local name: Origbo
Part used: Leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to treat stomachache, itching conditions and ringworm and to heal wounds. The leaf extract with a pinch of salt is used to treat stomachache. The leaf extract is used to rub the body in itching condition and ringworrn. The extract from the leaves is also used to heal deep wounds after two to three days' treatrnent.

Botanical name: Newbouldia laevis (P.Beauv.) Seemann ex Bureau — Family: Bignoniaceae
Cornrnon narne: Tree of life or life stick — Local narne: Ogiriki
Part used: Stem bark
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to treat barrenness, painful menstruation and threatened abortion. The bark of the tree together with pepper-soup spices (Ethiopian pepper) is grounded. It is taken twice daily.

Botanical name: Carica papaya L. — Family: Caricaceae
Cornmon name: Pawpaw — Local name: Eto-Oyibo
Part used; Leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This is used to treat malaria. Dried 1eaves of pawpaw, guava, neem leaves, lemon grass 1eaf with ukpukuhu (Alstonia boonei) are boiled together and allowed to cool. A cupful is taken three times daily for four days. The patient may a1so bath with the water

Botanical name: Combretum grandifolium F.Hoffm. — Family: Combretaceae
Local name: Ikedike
Part used: Leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This is used to treat jaundice. Decoction of the leaf is used to bath twice daily for three days.

Botanical name: Kalanchoe pinnata (Lam.) Pers.. — Family: Crassulaceae
Cornmon name: Resurrection plant. — Local name: Ebe-Okponkpan
Part used: Fresh leaves and root
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This is used to treat cough and navel wounds of newly born baby. Juice extracted from mildly flame – heated leaf is mixed with local ash and salt. This is then applied to the navel of baby until the wound heals. The root is cooked and the decoction is cupful taken twice daily to treat cough.

Botanical narne: Lagenaria siceraria (Molina) Standl. — Family: Cucurbitaceae
Common name: Bottle gourd — Local name: ahwore
Part used: Leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to treat liver problem The leaf juice is extracted and a glassful is taken three times daily for four days.

Botanical name: Momordica charantia L.. Family: Cucurbitaceae
Common name: African Cucumber Local name: Udjiro
Part used: Whole plant
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to treat convulsion. The whole plant is cooked and two spoons given thrice daily, The water is used to bathe the patient and juice from the leaf is put in the eyes to relieve convulsion. The fresh leaf is tied around the neck of children to relieve convulsion

Botanical name: Alchornea cordifolia (Schum. & Thonn.) Müll. Arg. Family: Euphorbiaceae
Local name: Osokpo
Part used: Leaves
Ailment cured and mode of administration: This is used to reawaken an unconscious person. The leaf is grounded and used to rub the body of an unconscious person to waken him up. The perceived stinging property of the leaf is believed to accomplish this waking up.

Botanical name: Alchornea laxiflora (Benth.) Pax & K.Hoffm. Family: Euphorbiaceae
Local name: Urievwu
Part used: Stem
Ailment cured and mode of administration: This is used as chewing stick to keep the teeth healthy because of its antimicrobial properties

Botanical name: Jatropha curcas L Farnily: Euphorbiaceace
Cornrnon name: Boundary Stick Local name: Ishakpa
Part used: Roots and leaves
Ailment cured and mode of administration: It is used to cure chronic gonorrhoea and headache. The root plus native chalk, ogogoro (local gin) and tobacco leaf is used for the gonorrhoea. All these are put inside a bottle; the ogogoro helps to extract the active constituents from these materials. The patients are always advised to drink a glassful twice daily for 3 days.

Botanical name: Manihot esculenta Crantz. Farnily: Euphorbiaceae
Cornrnon name: Cassava Local name: Imidaka
Part used: Leaves.
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to prevent cutlass from entering someone (but the person must be an Indigene of the study area). The juice from the leaf is extracted and drank over some incantation to prevent the entering of cutlass.

Botanical name: Phyllanthus muellerianus (Kuntze) Exell Family: Euphorbiaceae
Local name: Obuko lyeke
Part used: Leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to treat back worm. The juice extract from the leaves is mixed with local dry gin and a half-cup is given for two days to expel worms.

Botanical name: Ricinodendron heudelotii (Baill.) Pierre ex Heckel Farnily: Euphorbiaceae
Common name: Water cane Local name: Eke
Part used: Stem bark
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to treat labour pain and elephantiasis. The bark is grounded and applied topically to relieve labour pains and elephantiasis.

Botanical name: Baphia nitida Lodd. Farnily: Fabaceae
Local narne: Orhua
Part used: Leaves
Ailment treated cured and mode of administration: This is used to prevent miscarriage or abortion in women, The leaf is crushed and applied to the lower part of the abdomen twice daily for two days.

Botanical narne: Dialium guineense Willd. Farnily: Fabaceae
Cornmon name: Black or velvet tamarind Local name: Ohiorama
Part used: leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This is used to treat fever. Fresh 1eaves are boiled and the decoction is used to bath the patient suffering from fever. This is done twice daily for three days

Botanical name: Hymenostegia afzelii (Oliv.) Harms Farnily: Fabaceae
Local name: Upa
Part used twigs
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This is used to treat toothache and to clean teeth. The twigs are chewed for toothache

Botanical name: Piptadeniastrum africanum (Hook.f.) Brenan Family: Fabaceae
Local name: Owangan
Part used: Stern and root barks.
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used as snuff and stimulant of nervous system. The root and stem barks are grounded into powdered form and used.

Botanical name: Mammea africana Sabine Family: Clusiaceae
Local name: Urherame
Part used: Root barks.
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to treat skin disease and syphilis. The root bark is cooked and the patients suffering from any skin disease and syphilis is bathed with decoction by the plant.

Botanical name: Ocimum gratissimum L. Family: Lamiaceae
Local name: Ira

Part used: Leaves

Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to treat stroke. The liquid extracted from the leaf together with the white liquid from snail and the person's urine is used to treat stroke. Half a glass is taken twice daily. Awere (Tridax procumben), the leaf and flower are pounded with black pepper and Ishasha (spice). It is used to wake the dead nerve cells of the patient. treat stroke. Half a glass is taken twice daily. Awere (Tridax procumben), the leaf and flower are pounded with black pepper and Ishasha (spice). It is used to wake the dead nerve cells of the patient.

Botanical name: Solenostemon monostachyus (P.Beauv.) Briq. Family: Lamiaceae
Local name: Ariophe

Part used Leaves

Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to treat convulsion, tuberculosis, stomachache and to clear the eye. The juice from the leaf is put into the eye to clear it. The leaf is crushed and honey is added and used to treat tuberculosis. The leaf is boiled with a spice, black pepper (Piper guinensis), used to treat stomachache. This is taken thrice daily.

Botanical name: Allium sativum L. Farnily: Alliaceae
Common name: Haemorrhage plant Local name: Garlic

Part used: Bulb

Ailment cured and mode of administration: This is used to treat pile, appendicitis and hernia. Six to seven bulbs of the garlic are sliced inside a bottle with dry gin (ogogoro) and allowed for 3 days before use. One glass is taken twice daily for three days in the treatment of piles. The bulb is dug very early in morning and cut into smaller sizes and put into a bottle, an onion bulb, 7 seeds of egwoye and ogogoro are then added, A glassful is taken twice daily for three to four days to treat appendicitis and hernia

Botanical name: Gossypium hirsutum L; Farnily: Malvaceaeceae
Common name: Cotton Local name: Orur

Part used: Leaves

Ailment cured and mode of administration: This is used to relieve menstrual pain. The leaf is ground with black peper (uririe and boiled in water. A cupful is taken three times daily

Botanical name: Dissotis rotundifolia (Sm.) Triana Family: Melastomataceae
Local name: Ukuerovwo

Part used: Leaves or whole plant

Ailment treated and mode of administration: This is used to treat stomachache and diarrhoea in children. The leaf is cooked with alligator pepper (Aframomum meleguata) and a cupful is taken once daily for two days. Half a glass is given to children.

Botanical name: Azadirachta indica A. Juss.. Family: Meliaceae
Common name: Neem tree Local name: Dongoyaro
Part used: Seed
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to treat pile. The seed is usually bumt, powdered and mixed with sugar. A full tablespoon is taken twice daily. A glass of water is then latter drank to dilute the mixture. This is very effective for pile

Botanical name: Bosqueia angolensis Ficalho. Farnily: Moraceae
Local name: Otukhurhu
Part used: Leaf and stem bark
Ailment treated and mode of administration This is used to treat diarrhoea. The leaf and stern bark is boiled and a cupful ofthis decoction is taken once daily for 2 days.

Botanical name: Chlorophora excelsa (Welw) Benth. & Hook. Family Moraceae
Common name: Iroko tree Local name: Uno
Part used: Stem bark
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This is used to heal wounds, The bark of the plant is powdered and applied on the wound.

Botanical name**:** Musanga cecropioides R.Br. Farnily Moraceae
Local name: Ukhorube
Part used: Root barks
Aliment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to treat tapeworm and dysentery. The root bark is cooked and the decoction is given to the patient suffering from dysentery and tapeworm.

Botanical name: Musa paradisiaca L. Farnily: Musaceae
Common name: Plantain Local name: Orhe
Part used: Bark
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This is used to treat barrenness. The bark of the plantain and black pepper are pounded and cooked with electric fish A spoonful is taken morning and evening while the fish is licked and dried. This is done for seven days; on the seventh day the fish is eaten

Botanical name: Psidium guajava L. Family: Myrtaceae
Common name:Guava Local name: Igobe
Part used: Leaves.
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to treat fever. Fresh leaves of Igobe and pawpaw are boiled and the water is used to bath the patient with fever

Botanical name**:** Bambusa vulgaris Schrad. ex J.C.Wendl. Farnily: Poaceae
Common name: Bambu Local name: Okpo
Part used: Young shoot
Ailment treated cured and mode of administration: This is used to treat gonorrhoea. The young shoot is sliced and cooked with local gin together with tobacco leaf and native salt. A glassful is taken twice daily for three-four days.

Botanical name: Cymbopogon citratus (DC.) Stapf — Farnily: Poaceae
Common name: Lemmon grass — Local name: Iti
Part used: Leaves and roots
Ailment treated and mode of administration: It is used to treat cough, malaria fever, chest pains and to stirnulate the nervous system. The leaves together with onion bulbs are boiled and honey added. This is taken thriee daily for three to four days. The fresh or dried roots are chewed to stimulate the nervous system.

Botanical name: Citrus aurantiifolia (Christm.) Swingle — Farnily: Rutaceae
Common narne: Lime — Local name: Evwe
Part used: Fruits and leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This is used to treat impotens in men and to remove hatred from other persons. Ten to twelve limes is sliced and put inside a bottle, local gin is added and a cupful of the mixture taken twice daily for 1 week. Seven leaves of the lime are boiled together with native palm kernel cream used in bathing to remove hatred.

Botanical name: Citrus limon (L.) Burm. f. — Farnily: Rutaceae
Common narne: Lemon — Local name: Itie-akpaenfi
Part used: Leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This is used to treat malaria. The leaves are boiled together with mango and guava leaves. One cupful of the decoction is taken three times daily for three to four days. The steam from the decoction is also inhaled

Botanical name: Fagara leprieurii (Guill. & Perr.) Engl. — Farnily: Rutaceae
Local name: Ujo
Part used: Stern and root barks.
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to relieve toothache. The stem and root bark is powdered and applied on tooth thrice daily.

Botanical name: Fagara zanthoxyloides Lam. — Farnily: Rutaceae
Common narne: Oriata — Local narne: Ujo
Part used: Root
Ailment treated and mode of administration: U sed for general body weakness and toothache. A cupful of the warm extracts of the root is drunk twice daily for three days.

Botanical name: Blighia sapida Koenig — Farnily: Sapindaceae
Local name: Ukpe rerhen (oghighen)
Part used: Roots and stem barks
Ailment treated cured and mode of administration: This is used to treat fever and infections of the tongue. The root and stern bark is cooked with uririe and native salt. A cupful is taken twice daily for three days.

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| Botanical name: Hannoa klaineana Pierre & Engl. | Family. Simaroubaceae<br>Local name: Ofor |

Part used: Stem and root barks.
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This is used to treat hypertension and fever. The stem and root barks are cooked in water and the liquid extracted taken. A cupful is recommended twice daily for three days.

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| Botanical name: Solanum nigrum L.. | Family: Solanaceae |
| Common name: Black Nightshade | Local name: Ebe-akpe |

Part used: Leaves
Aliment treated and mode of administration: This plant is used to treat convulsion, redness of the eye, skin diseases, gonorrhoea and liver enlargement. The juice from the leaf is used to treat convulsion, clear the eye, cure gonorrhoea and liver enlargement. The leaf is crushed and used to treat skin disease.

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| Botanical name: Cola nitida (Vent.) Scott & Endl. | Family: Sterculiaceae |
| Common name: Kola | Local name: Evwe |

Part used: Cotyledon
Ailment treated and mode of administration: This is used to prevent boil. Native cola, which is put in arua leaf, followed by some incantations and then chewed

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|---|---|
| Botanical name: Fleurya aestuans (L.) Gaudich. | Family. Urticaceae |
| Common narne: Tropical nettle weed | Local narne: Ovie risokpo |

Part used Leaves
Ailment treated and mode of administration This plant is used to make the foetus develop well. The leaf is crushed with a mortar and native chalk. The paste is applied over the lower abdomen of the pregnant woman so that the foetus can be weil developed

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|---|---|
| Botanical name: Curcuma longa L. | Family: Zingiberaceae<br>Local narne: Iblue |

Part used: Rhizome
Ailment treated and mode of administration This is used to treat yellow fever, malaria and typhoid fever. The content of the rhizome is extracted with local gin and cupful of the extract is taken twice daily for three days

## Discussion

This study has once more shown the relevance oftraditional medicines in the health care system of indigenous peoples. The work has demonstrated that traditional herbal medicines are still prominently used in the treatment of ail kinds of diseases in the study area. Some of the species such as Drancaena mannii are used in the treatment and management of more than one ailment.

The use of most of the herbal preparations described in this work against malaria confirms the prevalence of this disease in tropical Africa. Nearly one third of the total number of herbs including: Cur*cuma longa*, *Magnifera indica*, *Cymbopogon citratus*, *Demethia tripetala*, *Dialium guineense*, *Psidium guagava* ., *Blighia sapinda* konig, *Carica papaya*, *Citrus limon* are used in the treatrnent of the disease.

The Ethiope indigenes use species such as Newbouldia laevis, Musa paradisiaca and C. aurantifolia to cure bareness females and impotency in males. Also the leaves of *Achyranthes aspera* are used to hasten delayed labour. The leaves of *Fluerya aestuans* are used to make the foetus in the wornb develop weIl.

Convulsion is a very common ailment especiaily in children below ten years, contributing significantly to infant rnortality. Consequently the people have found some notable herbs such as Momordica charantia and Solenostemon monostachys very useful in handling this condition. Apparently due to its high astringency property, species of Alchomea cordifolia, is used extensively to revive unconscious persons. Hannoa kIainbana stern and root barks have provided rernedy to the dreaded conditions of hypertension and associated illnesses.

Plants have varying medicinal applications among different peoples. For instance Moody et al . (1998) had reported the use of Alchornea laxiflora for the cure of gingivitis and other inflammatory conditions in Ibadan. However this study observed that this species is used as chewing stick to maintain healthy teeth due to its perceived antimicrobial properties. Also, Osifo (1992) reported that the Benin people of Edo state use the leaves of Phyllanthus amarus, Bryophyllum pinnatum and Portulaca oleracea in the treatrnent of convulsion. This study observed that the neighbouring Ethiope indigenes use species of Momordica charantia and Solenostemon monostachys to treat the same condition.

The study further revealed that the people of Ethiope use species of Bambusa vugaris and Solanum nigrum in treating gonorrhoea, which is a bacterial infection This plant however is rnostly used for staking and house construction in virtually ail parts of Nigeria with little knowledge of its medicinal value. The report of the use of seeds of Azadirachta indica against pile is new. The common knowledge of even in literature has been the use of the leaves of the species in the treatrnent of malaria (Okpanyi and Ezeukwe, 1981).

This study observed that the use of herbs and herbal preparations is a big business among the indigenous people. In view of 'this and the current global efforts at poverty alleviation the developrnent of this huge trade could become a veritable instrument of wealth creation among the people.

The study also observed that the harvesting and use of these plants especially those in the wild are uncontrolled, This is already posing serious threats to many of the species. Thus the cultivation of these plants for drug production locally will not orny reduce scarcity in the future but help in their
conservation. This will also reduce the efforts spent by traditional herbal practitioners to travel into
the bush to find their herbs (WRI, 1993).

Finally, fuis study has contributed in providing information on customary knowledge and use of plants by indigenous people. Moreover as mankind rnoves speedily away from the use of synthetic
products to natural one s, data such those provided by this study will becorne very invaluable in charting the new course.

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