

ETHNOPHARMACOLOGICAL STUDY OF MEDICINAL PLANTS TRADITIONALLY

USED IN WAJIR COUNTY TO TREAT DISEASES

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ABSTRACT

Traditional medicine refers to health practices approaches, knowledge and beliefs incorporating plant animal and mineral based medicines, spiritual therapies, manual techniques and exercises, applied singularly or in combination to treat, diagnose and prevent illness or maintain well-being. The study was guided by three objectives which include: to identify and document plants traditionally used for medicinal therapy; to establish the plant parts used for medicinal therapy; and to find out the method used for preparing and administering the drugs. The study utilized descriptive survey design. The study population consisted of the registered traditional herbal practitioners in Wajir County and the sample size of the selected traditional medical practitioners comprised all the registered herbalists in Dujis Sub-County. The sampling was done randomly from the County headquarters within the county to select the traditional medical practitioners' respondents for interviewing. The data collected was processed, presented graphically and was analyzed by using Statistical Package Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0. According to the analysis of the findings it was concluded that many of the traditional plants are facing threats of depletion and disappearance due to changes in culture, lifestyle aging and death of the knowledge holders thus it was recommended that each County in the Republic of Kenya to have a botanical garden because all forests have been cleared to create room for farming and settlement homes, Traditional healers need to be trained in the processing and storage of medicines to minimize the dangers to which patients are exposed through the use of traditional medicine, The government on the other hand should establish the necessary institutional and financial support to promote the potential role of the herbal industry in socio-economic development. Priority should be given to and documenting the various medicinal plants and herbs, which are used to treat common diseases in each country; setting up a network of laboratories and pilot plants with adequate facilities for the assessment of the efficacy of medicinal herbs, and establishing dosage norms and production of the most efficacious of herbal extracts, whether in tablet, capsule, powder, syrup, liquid or other forms.

Keywords: Wajir, Traditional medicine, Ethnobotanical, Plants,