

Title: The Role of Medicinal Plants in Traditional Medicine in Adwa District, Tigray, Northern Ethiopia

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Abstract

In Ethiopia, medicinal plants had been used since ancient time and became an important source of health care. Though majority of the people in the study area depend on ethnomedicine to manage different ailments, the indigenous knowledge largely is not documented. As a result, an ethnobotanical survey was conducted with the objective of assessing the role of medicinal plants in traditional medicine. Data was collected by using semi-structured interview and group discussion. Twenty informants were purposefully selected based on indigenous knowledge and gender. Ethnobotanical data was analyzed with descriptive statistics and expressed in tables and flow charts. A total of 25 medicinal plants (22 families) recorded to treat human and livestock ailments. Medicinal plant habit analysis indicates that shrubs occupy the highest proportion (36%), followed by trees and herbs (28% for each) and climbers (8%). The most commonly used plant parts in the study area were leaves and roots. Although medicinal plants play a great role in the society, their sustainability is declining through time in the study area due to the increasing number of users, improper uses of the plants and poor conservation. Therefore, the conservation of these medicinal plants would be important.

Keywords: Ailment, ethnobotany, herbalist, medicinal plant, traditional medicine.

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