Abstract

The aim of this study is to investigate medicinal plant diversity, ethnobotanical study and to document indigenous knowledge of people in wolaita zone. Data were gathered from, local healers using different ethnobotanical techniques such as; semi- structured interview, field observation, and group discussion & analyzed using descriptive statistical analysis methods. Discussions were conducted with informants and residents in seeking to understand the use, threats to traditional medicinal plants and its management, and to know how knowledge is maintained and transferred through family or community. A total of 60 traditional healers (40 men and 20 women) from the age of 18 and above were selected purposefully based on their knowledge and practice on medicinal plants. A total of 102 medicinal plant species belonging to 100 genera and 54 families were collected from the study area, among them 76(74.5%), were collected from wild while the remained 26(25.49%), were cultivated in the homegardens. The Family lamiaceae contributed the highest number of medicinal plants 12(11.8%), followed by Astraceae 8(7.84%).Based on the growth forms herbs accounted the highest numbers(49%).Regarding plant parts used leaves were the most frequently sought plant parts accounting for (66%). Majority of remedies (52%) were applied in mixing with pure water and (31%) used alone. Of the total medicinal plant species reported, 84% and 9.8% were used to treat human and livestock ailments respectively. The remained 5.9% were used to against both human and livestock ailments. Greater proportion of rout of administration 80%, were oral. Analysis of preference ranking showed, Ajuga integrifolia was the most perceived & preferred medicinal plant by people of the study area to treat stomach ache. Stepania abyssinica was found to be the most preferred plant to treat stomach complains in livestock. Some medicinal plants are popular than others in treating various diseases. For instance, Allium sativum were found to be the most popular, followed by Moringa stenopetala treating malaria. Concerning informant consensus factor, the highest ICF values were linked to problems associated with stomach ache (0.71). Jaccard`s Coefficient of Similarity (JCS) revealed highest similarity 34% were, found b/n sidama. Youngsters have almost no aims to receive and to transfer medicinal plant knowledge, so concerning bodies to create awareness in the area suggested. Agricultural expansion, were reported to be the major pressure to medicinal plants & little practice of conservation measures in the area. Keywords: Indigenous knowledge, ethinobotany and use categories, ailments, conservation & threats.