



ABSTRACT

The habitat destruction along with over exploitation and unscientific collection is the leading cause for decline of medicinal flora in any area. The present study was focused with the aim to explore the folk knowledge of Traditional health practitioners (THPs), the current population status and economic status of ethnomedicinal flora in district Okara, Punjab, Pakistan. This is the first quantitative study on ethnomedicinal flora which shows the dependence of local community on medicinal plant species in primary health care facilities. The ethnomedicinal data was collected by interviewing 21 local traditional health practitioners (THPs) from different localities of district Okara by semi-structured questionnaire. The data was analyzed by using quantitative tools such as Informant consensus factor (ICF), Fidelity Level (FL), Relative frequency citation (RFC), Simpsons and Shannon Diversity Index. A total of 137 medicinal plant species belonging to 46 families were documented in study area. The most frequently reported plant species were belonging to Asteraceae family with 13 species. The highest ICF value was calculated for gastrointestinal disorders. The results estimated the high frequency of occurrence for the medicinal plant species belonging to families *Astraceae*, *Amaranthaceae*, *Apiaceae*, *Brassicaceae*, *Cucurbitaceae*, *Ranunculaceae* and *Solanaceae*. The value of Simpsons and Shannon diversity index of ethnomedicinal flora in study area was 0.63 and 4.78 signifying the presence of moderate biodiversity. The highest use value was calculated for 12 species among which *Withania somnifera*, *Momordica charantia*, *Ficus religiosa*, *Calotropis procera*, *Prosopis cineraria*, *Ajuga integrifolia* were declining due to habitat destruction. The highest market price (Rs.1200 per kg) was estimated for the following medicinal plants species in raw form *Cucurbita moschata*, *Lpomoe acairica*, *Cassia absus* and *Capsicum frutescens*, as the seeds of these medicinal plants used for herbals preparation in large quantity so more number of individuals of species were required for treating ailments. The present study concludes that population status of reported wild species were declining due to habitat destruction therefore it is recommended to make preservation strategies to avoid habitat loss