

Abstract

AbaWanga people of western Kenya are known to have a rich history of ethnobotanical knowledge, probably due to their long interactive history of migration from North Africa to West Africa and then to Central and finally to East Africa. Their collective and accumulative ethnobotanical knowledge largely remains unknown and is likely to be just as rich and worth documenting, hence the current study. Non-alienating, dialogic, participatory action research (PAR) and participatory rural appraisal (PRA) approaches involving 100 women and men aged over 30 yrs old were utilized. A set of triangulation approach involving snowball and purposive sampling methods were used to select 100 key respondents. A total of 66 plant species distributed in 31 families were documented with Fabaceae family having the highest number of species (16.67%), followed by Euphorbiaceae (9.09%) and Asteraceae (6.06%). The study showed extensive ethnic-based and varied ethnobotanical uses. There were 54 human diseases/ill-health conditions treated, controlled and managed together with those plants offering nutritional, socio-cultural/economic and veterinary values. This showed an ethnobotanical system that was practically developed and could confidently supplement and complement conventional medicine, where appropriate following an in-depth scientific research.