

**ETHNOBOTANICAL DOCUMENTATION OF MEDICINAL PLANTS
USE BY TAGAKAULO TRIBE IN STA. MARIA, DAVAO
OCCIDENTAL**

MAREN MANTILLA PENDON

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ABSTRACT

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Adviser: JAYSON R. PUCOT, MS

This study investigates the ethnobotanical knowledge of medicinal plants used by the Tagakaulo tribe of Sta. Maria, Davao Occidental. Seventy-one informants predominately female (80%), with housewives representing the largest group users participated in semi-structured interviews. medicinal plants within the community. A total of 67 medicinal plants from 35 families were documented, addressing ailments across 15 disease categories. The Malvaceae family was notably represented, being used to treat nine illnesses in six disease categories. Decoction was the preferred preparation method, commonly used for drinking, bathing and soaking while leaves were commonly utilized plant part. Five ethnobotanical indices applied to evaluate the importance of plants: Use Value (UV), Relative Frequency of Citation (RFC), Cultural Importance Value (CIV), Informant Consensus Factor (ICF) and Use Diversity (UD). *Euphorbia hirta*

L. exhibited the highest values with an RFC of 0.887, UV of 0.079, CIV of 2.295 and UD of 0.333, commonly used to treat sore eyes, postpartum recovery, dengue, fever and stomachache. The disease category "Abnormal Signs and Symptoms" recorded the highest number of use-reports (608), with an ICF of 0.964 and Use Value of 8.56, indicating significant cultural agreement and perceived efficacy. By implementing these recommendations through Information Dissemination Education Program such as pamphlets and booklet, these ethnobotanical knowledge of the Tagakaulo tribe can be effectively preserved while contributing to community and scientific innovation.

Keywords: ethnobotanical documentation, IEC Program, cultural preservation of medicinal plants, Tagakaulo tribe

SDGs: Health and Wellness (Ethnobotany for production of spices and herbs for medicinal uses)