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Microbes associated with deterioration of wildlife used in traditional African medicine**Durojaye Soewu and Omobolanle Oladipupo**

Osun State University, Nigeria

Though wild animal (and plant) parts constitute the main ingredients employed in preparation of traditional African medicines, most often ingested by the end users, finished products are not subjected to any laboratory screening before being offered to end users through various sales outlets. Traditional methods used till date, for preparing these trado-medicines have little or no consideration for quality control as regards to microbial contaminants or deteriorants. This study isolated, identified and evaluated micro-organisms associated with deterioration of stored wild animal parts used in ethno-zoological practices and examined economic effects of loss in intrinsic value. It also investigated likely consequences of microbial load on human health as well as the resultant implications of in-storage deterioration on biodiversity conservation. Voucher specimens of eight wildlife species most frequently used in zotherapy, procured from randomly selected stalls, were subjected to laboratory microscopy and culturing. Ten species, belonging to two main types of microorganisms-bacteria and fungi-were isolated. Price values of animal parts were recorded before and after deterioration as a measure of the economic losses due to reduction in intrinsic value. Within a 6 months period, above forty percent drop in monetary values arising from loss in intrinsic values was recorded. Resultant lack of satisfaction may lead to more demand, necessitating further cropping of animals from the wild. These microbes are considerably important in terms of health implications on the end users of trado-medicinal preparations made with these animal parts and in terms of economic losses to traders of wild animal parts. There is a need to regulate, standardise and monitor preparation of these trado-medicines to minimise negative consequences on end users. Quantitative biomass evaluation of losses arising from microbes is also required to further assess the full impact on biodiverse resources.

durosoewu@hotmail.com