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Use of medicinal plants for gynecological treatments by women from a rural zone in the State of Pernambuco – Brazil

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Abstract: The use of medicinal plants as an alternative treatment and cure is a practice used from older years to the most present days, marking the history and evolution of industrial medicine, contributing to the development and keeping alive the traditional medicinal culture. Still, in the development and evolution of the pharmaceutical industrial market, the high cost leads part of the population to make use of traditional medicine, emphasized and with greater force by the ethno-botanical knowledge of populations, and passed from generation to generation. The use of medicinal plants becomes feasible in populations that are distant from civilizations and do not have contact and access to basic care, both for treatment with industrialized drugs and the public policies of medicinal plants offered by the Unified Health System (SUS). With a look focused on the practice of the use of medicinal plants as an alternative treatment in still small towns and extending civilizations. Through a descriptive field research, establish what the links of knowledge exist between the population of the century and its origins.

Keywords: Ethnobotany; Medicinal plants; Industrialization

1. Introduction

The use of plants for life is a very present culture of this before Christ, its purposes were diverse, used to dye, cover, protect and heal. When using plants, it was observed that not all of them were food or curative, some toxic that produced very serious side effects and others with hallucinogenic powers. The first records of the use of medicinal plants described since the ancient civilizations for therapeutic purposes were made in cuneiforms, the oldest type of writing a.c. (TOMAZZONI; NEGRELLE; CENTA, 2006).

The Papyrus of Ebers, one of the largest cataloged inscribes of diseases and medicinal plants, has citations of medicinal plants that are currently in use, among these highlights, genciana, (Genciana Lutea L.), sene, (Cassia angustifolia vahl.). In addition to the medicinal plants mentioned in the Ebers papyrus, mentions are made on how to use these plants, wax and honey, poisons and therapeutic use of vegetable oils, being considered the pharmacopoeia of antiquity, (MONTEIRO; BRANDELLI, 2017).

Brazil should be considered the pioneer in the discovery and development of new drugs due to the vast biodiversity present in its main biomes, which allowed for years to the present day, the survival and knowledge of tribes and communities distant from civilizations. The communities, in turn, have different knowledge and practices of cultivation and use of each other, expanding knowledge about medicinal plants (ROCHA, 2015).

The difficult access to simple communities, needy and distant from small and large populations and that does not have access to basic health care, can be attributed to the cultural model of a given population in small numbers or to those who do not have cultural habitats to attend Basic Health Units (UBS). The high cost of commercially offered industrialized medicines increases the difficulty of access (OLIVEIRA *et al*., 2003).

Therefore, the habit of using medicinal plants in the treatment of diseases is created. The need to achieve a cure for pain spurred the search for medicines and the teachings passed through generations in the use of medicinal plants was improving to create herbal medicines (OLIVEIRA; AKISUE, 2005).

The study of how plants are used by man as resources is called ethnobotany. With an integrative focus and strategic position, ethnobotany seeks to understand the developing world and the relationship between man and plants (ALBUQUERQUE,2009).

Ethnobotanism is the knowledge passed between several generations, an immaterial heritage with various purposes. It isan a of the alternative s of treatment for diseases that affect the female universe, having as example, vaginal discharge, pelvic inflammation, healing, pelvic and menstrual colic, menopause, urinary infection and pelvic infection. Currently the interest of the new generations has been leaving the knowledge of medicinal plants in oblivion and increasingly seeking conventional medicine (TOMAZZONI; NEGRELLE; BY LOURDES CENTA, 2006).

However, even with the forgetfulness of practice, caused by the arrival of technology and new advances, the use of medicinal plants still remains alive in many communities. The choice for the use of medicinal plants is attributed to the effective curative activity evaluated by the therapeutic power of plants, whether used whole or only in parts such as their roots, sheets, stems, fruits, seeds and flower (BOLZANI, 2016).

The study aimed, through a descriptive research among women from a rural area who have already made or make use of medicinal plants with therapeutic purpose for gynecological fins, to identify the types of plants used and the process included from harvest to consumption.

2. Methodology

The present work was carried out through a descriptive researchwhere the ethnobotanical knowledge of the practitioners of this pharmacology and the whole process involved, the methodology of obtaining these therapeutic insums, the administration, storage ofthe plants in natura and post-preparation of the insums was evaluated. Other factors taken into account were the way ofacquiring, place of cultivation, the form of cultivo, how preparations are made, the parts ofthe plants that areused, what is the objectof the specific use of a certain part of the plant, how people acquired the knowledge and the contrary view of the tied well-being that the practitioners present.

The study has approval from the Research Ethics Committee, under the protocol number: 23892819.9.0000.9227.

Since the Brazilian fauna is quite vast and rich in several types of nativeplan, thus offering infinite possibilities of species, which are closer to women who have acurriculum ofvillages and sinin thepopulations of the interior. Women with family rootsfrom the Brazilian countryside bring ethnobotany culture to homes within urban centers.

The work observeor, selector and identific or what are the medicinal plants according to the therapeutic objective, aiming that gynecology covers various pathologies and the like. The investigation was carried out with 20 women randomly selected among inhabitants of the rural area of Casinhas-PE (Figure 1) and of these 20, including also those who were from this region and populated the urban area but still live the practice of using medicinal plants. To carry outthe survey,the participants, sign a term clarifying that it is of free will to participate in theresearch and was stillcarried out a questionnaire aboutds practices.

According to the Brazilian Geographic Index, the City of Casinhas located in the interior of Pernambuco had in its last census in 2017 the estimated (IBGE) population of 13,766 inhabitants, being divided into 1,704 who inhabit the urban area and 12,062 who inhabit the rural area according to the State Database (BDE) (Figure 1).

Figure 1. Location of the city of Casinhas - PE and the number of inhabitants in the rural area (in red) and in the Urban area (in blue).

3. Results and Discussion

It was possible to verify through research that alternative medicine through the use of medicinal plants is a living practice and resulting from the ethnobotanical knowledge of women it makes in use. Knowledge involves ethnobotany as well as knowledge about the biodiversity present in the site, among some of which, quixaba were mentioned, using the interbank as an anti-inflammatory activity; the anti-inflammatory Aroeira also with proprieties for vulvo-vaginitis; the black cash with antiviral activate and antimicrobiane.

Most volunteers demonstrated having past knowledge among family members, such as which part to use and how to use, and tea is the most cited as also an accent bath associated with tea, where the form of infusion preparation for both tea and bathing is the most used. All have already made use of medicinal plants for gynecological treatment at some time in their lives, and some of them remain making use.

According to Schenkel *et al*., 2001, within the pharmaceutical area, the use of medicinal plants and extractions were and continue to be of great relevance, both for the improvement of formulations, as well as in the discovery of innovations in the pharmaceutical industry, for allopathic and herbal medicine purposes, their adjuvants and aesthetics.

The research corroborated with the work of Bolzani, 2016, in which he cites that the use of medicinal plants is still delimited by the diversity of species that can be found and for each region presenting differentiated Phyto-diversity. In the Urban Zone, it was observed greater difficulties in the use of medicinal plants for therapeutic use against vulvovaginitis, used on their own or requested by health professionals, either due to the lack of the product or the lack of knowledge in the use of medicinal plants.

According to Amorim and Santos,2003, 75% of Brazilian women have already presented or will present some episode of gynecological problems throughout their lives. Santos and Avelar, 2011, mention in their work that among the Brazilian regions, the North and Northeast are the ones that hold the largest contingent of women who make or have used medicinal plants against gynecological diseases.

However, knowledge regarding the care and maintenance of gynecological health using medicinal plants is still quite limited, according to Santos and Avelar, 2011. Few women receive correct information about the proper use of the plant for medicinal purposes, even considering the use of folk medicine important (BRASIL, 2006).

According to Brazil, 2016, it is important to know the adverse effects that the way of use and preparation can occur for users. Through the national policy and program of medicinal and herbal plants, all Brazilians must be guaranteed the safety and access to medicinal plants in a sustainable way of biodiversity and the production chain of the national industry.

The research found that in more internalized cities, the use of medicinal plants for therapeutic treatment is widely used, especially by women who have received information about the use of medicinal plants through family generations. Corroborating with Rocha, 2015, because the research of an ethnobotanical nature can help in the development and implementation of herbal medicines, by facilitating dialogue and exchanges of materials among specialists, besides assisting in the cure of certain diseases.

4. Conclusions

It is remarkable the effectiveness of medicinal plants accompanied by their use today, and that truly the past knowledge about generations and the scientifically proven consolidate that it is valid and true the ethnobotanical knowledge and practices.

It is also necessary to increase research on medicinal and herbal plants, as well as the incentive for the use of such plants in the treatment of various diseases. The research concluded that the use of medicinal plants by women in the Rural Zone is higher than among women in the Urban Zone.

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