

## **Medicinal plants used for traditional skin diseases treatment in Sabah, Malaysia**

### **ABSTRACT**

In drug discovery and pharmaceutical development, medicinal plants continue to be utilized as a valuable source of treatment for various skin disorders. The traditional use of ethnomedicinal plants in treating skin diseases such as itches, scabies, skin infections, shingles, pityriasis (dandruff), skin injuries (cuts, wounds, burns, animal bites), and skin wrinkles is highlighted in this paper. The objective of this study is to provide a review and summary of the medicinal plants employed for treating skin disorders specifically in Sabah. Semi structured interviews were carried out to obtain traditional knowledge of skin diseases treatments used by Bajau and Dusun villagers in Kota Belud, Sabah. The interviews aimed to gather information about the species of plants used by the villagers. Complementing the primary data collected through interviews, existing literature on traditional medicine, ethnobotany, and traditional knowledge in Sabah was reviewed. A total of 41 plant species belonging to 25 different families have been documented as remedies for skin disorders. Among these families, the Asteraceae family has the highest number of species used for treating skin disorders, with four species identified. Following closely is the Verbenaceae family, with three species recorded for their traditional use in skin disorder treatment. The leaves of *Hibiscus rosa-sinensis*, locally known as bunga raya, have been used by Dusun and Murut to treat wounds and as remedies to relieve carbuncle. Meanwhile, the rhizome of *Curcuma longa* has been used by Murut in the interior area of Pensiangan as traditional medicine for fungal infections. This research contributes to the understanding of the medicinal plants utilised in the treatment of skin disorders in Sabah. The documented plant species and their traditional uses serve as a foundation for further exploration and potential incorporation into evidence-based pharmaceutical practices.