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## Verification of ethnomedicinal claims of *Abelmoschus esculentus* leaves

**F B Borokini**

Rufus Giwa Polytechnic, Nigeria

Population experts say Igbo-Ora, a small town of about 100,000 people in Oyo State, south-western Nigeria, has the world's highest twinning rate. Researchers have long speculated that it's the diet that can help explain this statistics, though no direct relation between dietary intake and twin births has been proved. The real cause of the phenomenon has not been medically found but the people of Igbo-ora generally believe their traditional diet of *Abelmoschus esculentus* (L) (okra) leaf or "Ilasa soup" influences their multiple births. Several ethnomedicinal claims have been associated with okra leaves but there is a dearth of information on the nutritional values and phytochemistry. Hence this research investigated the nutritional and phytochemical quality as the first step of verification of its ethnomedicinal claims. The result of proximate compositions in % was; moisture contents ( $8.54 \pm 0.01$ ), crude protein ( $10.37 \pm 0.01$ ), ash ( $5.315 \pm 0.02$ ), crude fibre ( $6.24 \pm 0.03$ ), crude fat ( $2.54 \pm 0.01$ ), carbohydrate by difference ( $66.99 \pm 0.03$ ), and total dietary fibre ( $13.27 \pm 0.02$ ). The anti-nutrient factors in mg/100g were tannin ( $3.03 \pm 0.08$ ) oxalate ( $11.97 \pm 0.02$ ), and phytate ( $31.64 \pm 0.02$ ). Thiamin, riboflavin, niacin, ascorbic acid, tocopherol, saponin, alkaloids, phenol and flavonoids, steroids and cardiac glycosides were detected and quantified. Mineral elements, essential and non-essential amino acids were also detected in the sample. The leaves of *A. esculentus* possessed good nutritional and phytochemical potential that could be responsible for its associated ethnomedicinal claims. Further researches are needed to verify the bioactivity of its bioactive agents.

borokinif59@yahoo.com