

**Assessment of Cytotoxic Effects of Selected Medicinal Plants on Human Cervical, Breast
and Lung Cancer Cell lines**

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and Applied Sciences, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria**

**In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of Master of Science Degree
(M.Sc.) in Biochemistry**

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Certification

This is to certify that Oluwaseun Akinyemi, ADEDEJI with Matriculation Number LCU/PG/001398 carried out this research work titled “Assessment of Cytotoxic Effects of Selected Medicinal Plants on Human Cervical, Breast and Lung Cancer Cell lines” in the Department of Chemical Sciences (Biochemistry Unit), Faculty of Natural and Applied Sciences, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, for the award of Master Degree (M.Sc.) in Biochemistry and that this has not been previously submitted.

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Dedication

This research work is dedicated to the Almighty God through Jesus, the Wisdom of God.

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Even though the above-mentioned institution and persons have assisted in the process of this research work, I alone stand responsible for the errors, if any found in the work.

Abstract

Cancer remains a leading cause of death globally. Reports of severe adverse effects of anticancer drugs call for newer therapies from natural products. This study aims to investigate the cytotoxic effects of six medicinal plant extracts on human cervical (HeLa), breast (MCF-7) and lung (A549) cancer cell lines. The plant extracts were assayed for cytotoxicity using MTT assay method. The selectivity index was determined with the use of non-tumorigenic cell line (KMST-6). The most active plant was evaluated for its apoptotic effects and its effects on oxidative stress markers of the selected cell lines. Phytochemical composition of the most active plant extract was determined by GC-MS analysis. The leaf extract of *Ficus benjamina* has the highest cytotoxic effects on the cancer cell lines with IC_{50} values of 17.56, 33.35 and 33.57 $\mu\text{g/ml}$ on HeLa, MCF-7, and A549 cell lines respectively. Other plant extracts exhibited low cytotoxic effects with $IC_{50} > 100\mu\text{g/ml}$. The leaf extract of *Ficus benjamina* possesses a selectivity index (SI) of 2.2 in the HeLa cell line. At $p \leq 0.05$, Bax protein level was significantly higher in MCF-7, while caspase-9 and 3 were significantly higher in HeLa cell line. Activities of SOD increases in all the cell lines but significantly in MCF-7 ($p \leq 0.05$). The activities of GST and the levels of GSH were significantly reduced in MCF-7 and A549. LPO and NO were lowered significantly in all cancer cell lines ($p \leq 0.05$). The GC-MS analysis revealed the presence of phenolic compounds (Phytol and Tocopherols) and terpenoids (Eicosyne and Eicosane). The extract of *F. benjamina* induces apoptosis in HeLa and MCF-7. The analysis of bioactive compounds showed that the extract possesses antioxidant and anti-inflammatory properties. This study suggests that the leaf of *F. benjamina* could be a source of potential and safe anticancer drug against cervical cancer

Keywords: Medicinal plants, Cancer cell lines, Cytotoxicity, Selectivity index.

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Table of Contents

Content	Page
Certification	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgement	iiiv
Abstract	v
Table of Contents	v
List of Tables	xi
List of Figures	xii
List of Abbreviations	xiii
Chapter One: Introduction	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.1 Background of the Study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.2 Statement of the Problem	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.3 Justification of the Study.	Error! Bookmark not defined.
1.4 Aim and Objectives of the Study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Endnotes	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Chapter Two: Literature Review	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1. Cervical Cancer	Error! Bookmark not defined.

2.1.1	Etiology of Cervical Cancer	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.1.2	Initiation and Progression of Cervical Cancer	Error! Bookmark not defined.
.1.3	Treatment of Cervical Cancer	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.2	Breast Cancer	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.2.1	Genetic Predispositions as Important Risk Factors of Breast Cancer	Error! Bookmark not defined.
	not defined.	
2.2.2	Non-genetic Risk Factors of Breast Cancer	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.2.3	Cancer Gene Mutations in Breast Cancer	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.3	Lung Cancer	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.3.1	Incidence of Lung Cancer	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.3.2	Histologic Classification of Lung Cancer	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.3.3	Risk Factors of Lung Cancer	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.3.4	Prevention	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.4	Cancer Cell Lines	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.5	The Pathway to Cell Death in Cytotoxicity	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.6	Medicinal Plants	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.7	Plants of Study	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.7.1	<i>Ficus benjamina</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.7.2	<i>Euphorbia milli</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.7.3	<i>Vitex doniana</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.

2.7.4	<i>Euphorbia heterophylla</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.7.5	<i>Parkia biglobosa</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.7.6	<i>Piliostigma thonningii</i>	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.8	Cytotoxicity of Medicinal Plants.	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.9	Types of Cytotoxicity Assay	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.10	Chemotherapeutic in Cancer Treatment	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.11	Phytochemicals in Cancer Treatment	Error! Bookmark not defined.
2.11.1	Phytochemicals Used in Current Cancer Therapy	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Endnotes		Error! Bookmark not defined.
Chapter Three: Methodology		Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.1	Materials	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.1.1	Collection of Plants	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.1.2	Cell lines	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.1.3	Chemicals and Reagents	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2	Methods	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2.1	Preparation of Plant Extracts	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2.2	Cytotoxicity Assay	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2.3	Preparation of Cell Lysate for Biochemical Assays.	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2.4	Quantitative Determination of Human Bcl-2, BAX, Caspase-9 & Caspase-3	Error!
Bookmark not defined.		

3.2.5	Assessment of Lipid Peroxidation (LPO) Activity	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2.6	Estimation of Reduced Glutathione (GSH) Level.	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2.7	Determination of Superoxide Dismutase (SOD) Activity.	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2.8	Estimation of Glutathione S-Transferase (GST) Activity	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2.9	Determination of Nitric Oxide (NO) Level	Error! Bookmark not defined.
3.2.10	GC-MS Analysis	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Endnotes		Error! Bookmark not defined.
Chapter Four: Results and Discussion		Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.1	Results of Findings	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.1.1	Cytotoxicity Test	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.1.2	Selectivity Index Test	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.1.3	BAX Protein Level	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.1.4	Caspase-9 Protein Level	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.1.5	Caspase-3 Protein Level	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.1.6	Activity of Glutathione-S- Transferase	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.1.7	Level of Glutathione (GSH)	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.1.8	Level of Superoxide Dismutase (SOD)	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.1.9	Lipid Peroxidation	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.1.10	Nitric Oxide Level	Error! Bookmark not defined.

4.1.11	GC-MS Analysis	Error! Bookmark not defined.
4.2	Discussion of Findings	Error! Bookmark not defined.
	Endnotes	Error! Bookmark not defined.
	Chapter Five: Conclusion	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.1	Summary of Findings	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.2	Conclusion	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.3	Recommendations	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.4	Contributions to Knowledge	Error! Bookmark not defined.
5.5	Suggested Areas for Further Research.	Error! Bookmark not defined.
	Bibliography	Error! Bookmark not defined.
	Appendices	Error! Bookmark not defined.
	Biodata	Error! Bookmark not defined.
	The University Compliance Certification	Error! Bookmark not defined.

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List of Tables

Table	Title	Page
4.1: 102	Cytotoxicity of selected medicinal plant extracts on HeLa MCF-7, and A549 Cell	lines
4.2: 104	Selectivity index of selected medicinal plant extract on HeLa, MCF-7 and A549 Cell	lines
4.3: 113	GC-MS analysis of bioactive compounds in Methanol extract of <i>F. benjamina</i> Leaf	



List of Figures

Figure	Title
Page	
2.1: 38	Cell death pathway in cytotoxicity
2.2: 43	<i>Ficus benjamina</i> leaf
2.3: 45	<i>Euphorbia Milli</i> leaf
2.4: 47	<i>Vitex Doniana</i> leaf
2.5: 49	<i>Euphorbia heterophylla</i> leaf
2.6: 51	<i>Parkia biglobosa</i> tree
2.7: 53	<i>Piliostigma thonningii</i> plant
2.8: 67	Chemical structure of some anticancer phytochemicals in preclinical trial
3.1: 89	MTT assay equation
4.1: 105	Effect of Methanol extract of <i>F. benjamina</i> leaf on the Bax protein expression in HeLa, MCF-7 and A549 cell lines
4.2: 106	Effect of Methanol extract of <i>F. benjamina</i> leaf on the Cas-9 protein expression in HeLa, MCF-7 and A549 cell lines
4.3:	Effect of Methanol extract of <i>F. benjamina</i> leaf on the Cas-3 protein expression in

107	HeLa, MCF-7 and A549 cell lines
4.4: 108	Effect of Methanol extract of <i>F. banjamina</i> leaf on the GST activity in HeLa, MCF-7 and A549 cell lines
4.5: 109	Effect of Methanol extract of <i>F. banjamina</i> leaf on the GSH level in HeLa, MCF-7, A549 and KMST-6 cell line
4.6: 110	Effect of Methanol extract of <i>F. banjamina</i> leaf on the SOD activity in HeLa, MCF-7, A549 and KMST-6 cell lines
4.7: 111	Effect of Methanol extract of <i>F. banjamina</i> leaf on the LPO activity in HeLa, MCF-7, A549 and KMST-6 cell lines
4.8: 112	Effect of Methanol extract of <i>F. banjamina</i> leaf on the NO activity in HeLa, MCF-7, A549 and KMST-6 cell lines

List of Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
ATP	Adenosine Triphosphate
CPE	Cytopathic Effect
DMSO	Dimethylsulfoxide
EDTA	Ethylenediaminetetraacetic acid
ELISA	Enzyme-linked Immunosorbent Assay
GST	Glutathione-S-Transferase

GSH	Reduced Glutathione
HRP	Horseradish Peroxidase
IC ₅₀	Half maximal Inhibitory Concentration
LPO	Lipid Peroxidation
MTT	3-(4,5-dimethylthiazol-2-yl)-2,5-diphenyltetrazolium bromide
NADH	Nicotinamide Adenine Dinucleotide Hydrogenase
NO	Nitric Oxide
OD	Optical Density
ROS	Reactive Oxygen Species
SI	Selectivity Index
SOD	Superoxidismutase

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