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Traditional medicinal knowledge of plants used for cancer treatment by communities of mountainous areas of Fez-Meknes-Morocco



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ABSTRACT

Background: Since their existence on earth, humans have used herbal medicine to meet their requirements for medication. **The aim of the study:** This work refers to a study conducted to carry out an ethnopharmacological survey of medicinal plants used for the treatment of cancer in Fez-Meknes region of Morocco. **Material and Methods:** To achieve this goal, 300 informants including 237 local people and 63 herbalists. They were requested to fill a survey related questionnaire aiming at the collection of data about the addressed objective. Informants were asked about the vernacular names, parts of medicinal plants used, mode of preparation, route of administration, reference area as well as the ecological distribution. The Relative Frequency of Citation (RFC) and Fidelity Level (FL) were calculated to identify the most effective plants recommended by informants for disease treatment. **Results:** The findings obtained in the present survey revealed that 94 species belonging to 47 families have been used for cancer treatment in the region of Fez-Meknes. Fruits, leaves, and seeds are the most commonly used plant parts, by the time powder and infusion are the most common methods used for drug preparations. **Conclusion:** This work may contribute towards the society as it provides interesting data on traditional medicinal knowledge of medicinal plants used to fight cancer.

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1. Introduction

Morocco is a Mediterranean country located in the North of Africa. It's geologically characterized by the presence of four large mountainous areas named the Rif, the Middle Atlas, the High Atlas, and the Anti-Atlas. Morocco is limited by the Mediterranean sea, the Atlantic Ocean on the north, and the west respectively as well as Sahara in the far south (El-Hilaly et al., 2003).

Morocco is known for its large variety of climatic conditions including both moderate humid and sub-humid climates (Born

et al., 2009). The Moroccan flora is one of the richest and varied worldwide with about 4200 species. 22% of which are endemic to Moroccan soil. A large number of medicinal plants have been used by the Moroccan population to fight diseases and most of which got registered in Moroccan pharmacopeia (Rankou et al., 2013); (FENNANE and REJDALI, 2016).

Medicinal plants have widely been used as a natural source of remedies for curing multiple diseases including cancer. According to the World Health Organization (WHO), in developing countries, more than 80 % of people use herbal medicine in the treatment of different diseases (Benali et al., 2017).

Cancer remains one of the most common leading causes of death worldwide despite scientific advances in treatment options (World Health Organization, 2018). For this reason, researchers have a big interest in discovering new natural anticancer agents to mitigate this lethal disease. According to the World Health Organization, cancer was responsible for 9.6 million deaths in 2018. Moreover, about 70% of deaths from cancer occur in developing countries (World Health Organization, 2018).

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Due to their accessibility and affordability, natural remedies are widely used in low-income countries to treat cancer (Kabbaj et al., 2012). Anticancer agents based herbal medicines play a crucial role in the daily routines of many urban and rural Moroccans lives. However, ethnopharmacological knowledge of some regions in Morocco, especially in Fez-Meknes region remains poorly known.

This survey aims at identifying the medicinal plants used for cancer treatment by the indigenous population of Fez-Meknes region of Morocco and to contribute towards society as it provides ethnopharmacological knowledge related to cancer treatment in the study area.

2. Materials and methods

2.1. Study area

The study was conducted in four sites within the Fez-Meknes region in Morocco (Fez, Moulay yacoub, Meknes, and Taounate) covering both rural and urban localities (Fig. 1) with the following coordinates; latitude 34 °02'20.03" N. Geographically, it approximately covers 40.075 Km² making 5.7% of the total land area of the national territory and populated with 4,236,892 people. The climate of the region ranges from the Mediterranean to the continental type, precipitation levels vary between 300 mm/year and 800 mm/a (la Direction Générale des Collectivités Locales, 2015).

Fez-Meknes region- Morocco is among the most recognized region in the country for use of traditional herbal medicine against diseases and, therefore, was selected for being a study area (Jouad et al., 2001); (Ammor et al., 2020).

2.2. Data collection

An ethnopharmacological survey was conducted from October 2016 until February 2017 in the Fez-Meknes region (Morocco). During this period, 300 informants including 237 local people (sellers, purchasers, consumers, cultivators, workers) and 63 herbalists living in different urban and rural areas were selected to be as informants. Afterward, informants were invited to respond to a face-to-face interview about the vernacular name of plants used to treat cancer, parts of plants used, methods of preparation, route of administration, frequency of use, plant- type of cancer treated, prescription, unique use of traditional medicine or combined of modern. Further questions on criteria of the selected informants including age, gender, education, healthcare choices were

addressed in the survey. Afterward, the collected data was analysed and discussed according to the earlier literature.

Patients diagnosed with cancer in the study area, they use herbal medicines as an alternative treatment to fight cancer according to methods reported in the culture and knowledge inherited from previous generations either verbally or written. Based on the medical diagnosis that leads to the identification of cancer type, traditional healers recommend treatment protocols including natural preparations for patients according to the type of cancer diagnosed.

2.3. Data analysis

Data analysis as well as graphs were performed using Excel 10. Ethnobotanical data were calculated using quantitative indices such as the relative frequency of citation (RFC) and fidelity level (FL).

2.3.1. Relative frequency of citation

The relative frequency of citation (RFC) refers to the most commonly cited plants in the study area for use against diseases (Tardío and Pardo de Santayana, 2008). RFC was calculated according to the following formula:

$$RFC (\%) = (FC / N) \times 100$$

FC: Number of informants who use plant species against any disease

N: Total number of informants.

2.3.2. Fidelity level

Fidelity level (FL) was calculated to determine the most frequently used plant species to treat a particular disease.e. cancer in the study area (Friedman et al., 1986). Fidelity level (FL) was calculated according to the following formula:

$$FL (\%) = Np / Ni * 100$$

Np: Number of informants who claim the use of species to treat a particular disease

Ni: Total number of informants who claim the use of plant against any given disease

Plants have high FL values are considered the most preferred and effective species for the treatment of ailment categories (Friedman et al., 1986).

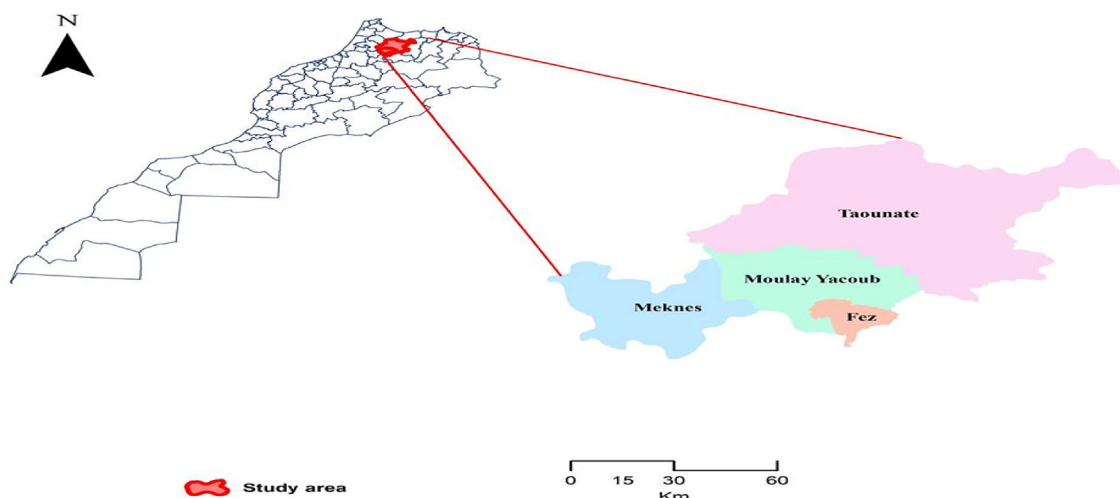


Fig. 1. Map of the study area (Fez- Meknes region- Morocco) with geographic boundaries.

Table 1
Medicinal plants used for the treatment of cancer in the region of Fez-Meknes Morocco.

Family Scientific name	Vernacular names	RCF (%)	FL %	Reference area(% of use)	Ecological distribution
Actinidiaceae <i>Actinidia chinensis</i> var. <i>deliciosa</i> (A.Chev.) A.Chev.	Kiwi	0.67	50	Fez (1) Meknes (1)	Cul
Aloaceae <i>Aloe vera</i> (L.) Burm.f	Sabar	2.67	57.14	Fez (6) Meknes (2)	Cul
Amaranthaceae <i>Beta vulgaris</i> L.	Barba	0.33	25	Meknes (1)	Cul
Annonaceae <i>Annona cherimola</i> Mill.	Chirimoya	1	33.33	Fez (3)	Imp
Apiaceae <i>Petroselinum crispum</i> (Mill.) Fuss	ma'adnūs	2.67	61.53	Meknes (2) Fez (5) Taounate (1)	Cul
<i>Cuminum cyminum</i> L.	Kemmün	1	33.33	Fez (3)	Cul
<i>Apium graveolens</i> L.	Kräfes	1	60	Fez (3)	Sp/ Cul
<i>Ammi visnaga</i> (L.) Lam.	bešniha	0.33	25	Fez (1)	Sp
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> Mill.	nāfa'	0.33	20	Taounate (1)	Sp/ Cul
<i>Daucus carota</i> L.	hizzu	1	37.5	Fez (2) Meknes (1)	Cul
<i>Ammodaucus leucotrichus</i> Coss.	kammün es-sōfi	0.33	33.33	Fez (1)	Sp
<i>Pimpinella anisum</i> L.	ḥabbat ḥalāwa	0.33	33.33	Taounate (1)	Cul
<i>Thapsia garganica</i> L.	Deryās	0.33	33.33	Fez (1)	Sp
<i>Magydaris panacifolia</i> (Vahl.) Lange	Frifra	0.33	50	Meknes (1)	Sp
Apocynaceae <i>Apteranthes europaea</i> (Guss.) Murb.	Daghmos	17.67	89.83	Taounate (3) Fez (40) Meknes (10)	Sp
Areaceae <i>Phoenix dactylifera</i> L.	nnhel 'Jmar	0.33	20	Fez (1)	Sp
Aristolochiaceae <i>Aristolochia longa</i> L.	berezṭom	12	85.71	Fez (31) Meknes (3) Taounate (2)	Sp
Asteraceae <i>Artemisia herba-alba</i> Asso.	Chih	4	60	Fez (10) Meknes (1) Taounate (1)	Sp
<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i> (L.)	māgrāmān terhalā	1	60	Fez (2) Meknes (1)	Sp
<i>Atractylis gummifera</i> L.	Ddād	0.33	50	Fez (1)	Sp
<i>Chamaemelum nobile</i> (L.) All.	Bābnūj	0.33	14.28	Fez (1)	Cul
<i>Cynara cardunculus</i> L.	horšef	0.33	25	Fez (1)	Cul
Berberidaceae <i>Berberis hispanica</i> Boiss. & Reut.	Argīs	3	64.28	Fez (6) Taounate (3)	Sp
Boraginaceae <i>Borago officinalis</i> L.	lisān at-tūr	0.33	25	Fez (1)	Sp
Brassicaceae <i>Lepidium sativum</i> L.	ḥabb er-ršād	1.33	50	Fez (2) Meknes (1) Taounate (1)	Cul
<i>Brassica oleracea</i> L.	Suflur	0.33	50	Fez (1)	Cul
<i>Brassica rapa</i> L.	Left	0.33	33.33	Fez (1)	Cul
<i>Raphanus raphanistrum</i> subsp. <i>sativus</i> (L.) Domin	Lejfel	0.33	25	Taounate (1)	Cul
<i>Sinapis alba</i> L.	Khاردal	1	50	Fez (1)	Sp /Cul
Cactaceae <i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i> (L.) Mill.	Hendi/zaaloul	1.33	50	Taounate (2) Meknes (2)	Sp/ Cul
Camelliaceae <i>Camellia sinensis</i> (L.) Kuntze	Atāy	1.67	41.66	Fez (4) Taounate (1)	Imp
Cannabaceae <i>Cannabis sativa</i> L.	l-kif	0.33	25	Fez (1)	Cul
Capparidaceae <i>Capparis spinosa</i> L.	Kabār	2	60	Fez (2) Taounate (3) Meknes (1)	Sp
Caryophyllaceae <i>Herniaria hirsuta</i> L.	herras leḥjar	0.33	25	Meknes (1)	Sp
Cucurbitaceae <i>Citrullus lanatus</i> (Thunb.) Matsum. & Nakai	Hadja	0.33	25	Fez (1)	Sp

(continued on next page)

Table 1 (continued)

Family Scientific name	Vernacular names	RCF (%)	FL %	Reference area(% of use)	Ecological distribution
<i>Cucumis sativus</i> L.	hiyār	0.33	33.33	Fez (1)	Sp
Ephedraceae <i>Ephedra alata</i> Decne	l-a'lenda	0.67	40	Meknes (1) Fez (1)	Sp
Euphorbiaceae <i>Euphorbia resinifera</i> O.Berg	zakkūm /tikiūt ddaǧmūs	0.33	25	Fez (1)	Sp
Fabaceae <i>Vicia faba</i> L.	Fūl	0.33	25	Fez (1)	Cul
<i>Cicer arietinum</i> L.	l-ḥommṣ	0.33	25	Fez (1)	Cul
<i>Vicia ervilia</i> (L.) Willd.	Kersenna	0.33	33.33	Fez (1)	Sp + cul
<i>Trigonella foenum-graecum</i> L.	l-ḥelba	4.67	53.84	Fez (12) Meknes(1) Taza(1)	Cul
<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i> L.	'arq as-sūs	0.33	16.66	Fez (1)	Sp
Fagaceae <i>Quercus ilex</i> L.	al-bellūṭ	0.67	28.57	Fez (1) Meknes (1)	Sp
Geraniaceae <i>Erodium guttatum</i> (Desf.) Willd.	Wadmi	1	13	Fez (1)	Sp
Lamiaceae <i>Marrubium vulgare</i> L.	merriwut, merriwa īfzi	7.33	62.85	Fez (14) Meknes (5) Taounate (2) My Yacoub (1)	Sp
<i>Ajuga iva</i> (L.) Schreb.	Sendgūra	1.33	44.44	Fez (3) Meknes (1)	Sp
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> L.	Azīr	1.33	36.36	Fez (3) Taounate (1)	Sp + Cul
<i>Origanum vulgare</i> L.	Zaatar/Sahtar	1.67	33.33	Fez (3) Taounate (2)	Sp + Cul
<i>Satureja granatensis</i> (Boiss. & Reut.) Sennen & Mauricio	z'itra	0.33	20	Taounate (1)	Sp
<i>Salvia officinalis</i> L.	Sālmiya	1.67	35.71	Fez (4) My Yacoub (1)	Cul
<i>Origanum majorana</i> L.	Merdedūš	1	33.33	Fez (3)	Cul
Lauraceae <i>Cinnamomum camphora</i> (L.) J.Presl	Kāfūr	0.33	33.33	Fez (1)	Imp
Liliaceae <i>Allium sativum</i> L.	ṭūm, ṭūma	9.33	63.63	Fez (19) Meknes (4) Taounate (5)	Cul
<i>Allium cepa</i> L.	l-beṣla hamra	3.33	55.55	Fez (5) Meknes(5)	Cul
<i>Drimia maritima</i> (L.) Stearn	Bsel l 'aṣṣal	0.67	33.33	Fez (2)	Sp
<i>Allium ampeloprasum</i> L.	Borrō	0.67	13	Fez (1) Meknes (1)	Cul
Linaceae <i>Linum usitatissimum</i> L.	zerri'at l-kettān	2	60	Fez (2)	Cul
Malvaceae <i>Malva sylvestris</i> L.	l-hubbeyza	0.33	33.33	Taounate (1)	Sp
Meliaceae <i>Rubia cordifolia</i> L.	L'acajou	0.33	20	Meknes (1)	Cul
Mimosaceae <i>Acacia raddiana</i> Savi	ṭalḥ	0.33	20	Fez (1)	Sp
<i>Vachellia seyal</i> (Delile) P.J.H.Hurter	l-'alk	0.33	25	Fez (1)	Sp
Moraceae <i>Ficus carica</i> L.	qormiš	1.66	41.66	Fez (2) Taounate (3)	Cul
Myrtaceae <i>Eugenia caryophyllata</i> Thunb.	qoronfel	0.67	20	Fez (2)	Imp
Oleaceae <i>Olea europaea</i> L.	Zaytūn	2.67	42.10	Fez (7) Meknes (1)	Sp + Cul
Pedaliaceae <i>Sesamum indicum</i> L.	Jeljlān	0.67	25	Fez (2)	Cul
Pinaceae <i>Cedrus atlantica</i> (Endl.) Manetti ex Carrière	l-ārṣ	0.33	33.33	Taounate (1)	Sp
<i>Pinus halepensis</i> Mill.	Taydā	0.67	66.66	Fez (1)	Sp
Piperaceae <i>Piper nigrum</i> L.	l-yebzār	0.33	12.5	Fez (1)	Imp
Poaceae <i>Hordeum vulgare</i> L.	ša'ir	1	50	Fez (1)	Cul
<i>Triticum aestivum</i> L.	l-gemḥ	0.33	25	Fez (1)	Cul
Portulacaceae					

Table 1 (continued)

Family Scientific name	Vernacular names	RCF (%)	FL %	Reference area(% of use)	Ecological distribution
<i>Portulaca oleracea</i> L. Punicaceae <i>Punica granatum</i> L.	Rejla er-rummān	0.33 1.33	50 40	Taounate (1) Fez (1) Taounate (2) Meknes (1)	Sp Cul
Ranunculaceae <i>Nigella sativa</i> L.	Sānūj/ Haba Souda/ ḥabbet el baraka	10	71.42	Fez (18) Meknes (4) Taounate (4) My yacoub (4)	Cul
Rhamnaceae <i>Ziziphus jujube</i> Mill.	Nbak/Sadra	0.33	16.66	Taounate (1)	Sp
Rosaceae <i>Fragaria × ananassa</i> (Duchesne ex Weston) Duchesne ex Rozier	l-frez	0.33	50	Taounate (1)	Cul
Rutaceae <i>Citrus aurantium</i> L.	ḥāmmēd beldī	1.33	40	Taounate (1) Fez (1)	Cul
Solanaceae <i>Solanum lycopersicum</i> L. <i>Solanum tuberosum</i> L.	maṭīša bṭāṭa	0.33 0.33	33.33 50	Fez (1) Fez (1)	Cul Cul
Urticaceae <i>Urtica dioica</i> L.	Horiga	0.67	40	Fez (2)	Sp
Vitaceae <i>Vitis vinifera</i> L.	Aanab	1	37.5	Taounate	Cul
Zingiberaceae <i>Curcuma longa</i> L. <i>Zingiber officinale</i> Roscoe	harqum skenjbir, skenjabil	2.67 3	57.14 56.25	Fez (8) Fez (5) My Yacoub (1) Meknes (1)	Imp Imp
<i>Elettaria cardamomum</i> (L.) Maton	qa'qolla	0.33	33.33	Fez (1)	Imp
Zygophyllaceae <i>Peganum harmala</i> L.	Harmal	1.33	66.66	My Yacoub (3) Fez (1)	Sp

Sp: Spontaneous; Cul: Cultivated; Imp: Imported.

Informants provided data on plants used for the treatment of cancer in the Fez Meknes region including methods of preparation, plant parts used as well as the administration mode. The obtained results are summarized in.

3. Results and discussion

Collected data on medicinal plants used for the treatment of cancer in the Fez- Meknes region was analysed based on the relative frequency of citation (RCF) and fidelity level (FL). RCF and FL values obtained in this work ranged from 0.33 % to 17.67 % and 12.5 % to 89.83 % respectively.

The present survey was carried out in the Fez Meknes region in 4 different locations (Fez, Moulay Yacoub, Meknes, and Taounate) in which it was recorded that 94 plant species belonging to 47 families have been used to fight cancer. These findings were partially in agreement with the earlier data which showed that 63 medicinal plants are traditionally used against cancer (Samouh et al., 2019).

The following medicinal plants were the most reported species in traditional use against cancer in the study area; *Apteranthes europaea* Guss. (17.67 %), *Aristolochia longa* L. (12 %), *Nigella sativa* L. (10 %), *Allium sativum* L. (9.33 %) and *Marrubium vulgare* L. (7.33 %). On the other hand, our findings were in accordance with the earlier literature which reported that *Nigella sativa* L. and *Aristolochia longa* L. have been used for the treatment of cancer in two Moroccan regions; Rabat and Greater Casablanca (Samouh et al., 2019) (Table 1Table 2).

Fidelity level parameter permits the identification of the most abundant species used to treat cancer in the study area. Among 94 inventoried plants 14 species were identified with FL equal or greater than 60%.

In the current research study, it was reported that *Apteranthes europaea* Guss. (89.83 %), *Aristolochia longa* L. (85.71 %), *Nigella*

sativa L. (71.42 %), *Peganum harmala* L. (66.66 %), *Pinus halepensis* Mill. (66.66 %), *Berberis hispanica* Boiss. & Reut. (64.28 %), *Allium sativum* L. (63.63 %) and *Marrubium vulgare* L. (62.85 %) were the most common medicinal plants used for cancer treatment in the Fez-Meknes region. Our study agrees with the earlier literature which showed that plants higher in FL values are recommended for cancer treatment (Tadesse et al., 2018).

The use of medicinal plants is more among women rather than men (67% vs. 33%) according to our survey (Fig. 2c). Women are more knowledgeable about the uses of medicinal plants. Apart from this, women of the region studied also impart knowledge to their wards either verbally or written. These results were in accordance with the earlier data (Samouh et al., 2019). In the current survey, it was reported that several informants were illiterate (Fig. 2.a). This finding was in agreement with other ethnobotanical studies (Kabbaj et al., 2012);(Ammor et al., 2020). 69% of respondents prefer the use of modern medicine against cancer vs. 27 % prefer the use of herbal medicine. However, only 4 % of informants prefer the combination of both (Fig. 2.b). Reasons that make many people based in the study area using herbal medicines for medication against cancer have already been reported in the previous literature (Bourhia et al., 2019). The latter reported the effectiveness of traditional preparations in the treatment of cancer, less side effects compared to conventional drugs, inaccessibility to modern medicines for those living in rural areas, the high and rising cost of medical care for people with low income. However, many informants (69 %) as reported in our survey are no longer interested in using traditional medicine for medication against cancer. This result can be explained by the fact that several informants are

Table 2
Information about medicinal plants used alone for the treatment of cancer in the region of Fez-Meknes.

Scientific name Family	Parts used	Preparation Modes	Solvent/ Excipient	Administraion route	Cancer type
Actinidiaceae					
<i>Actinidia chinensis</i> var. <i>deliciosa</i> (A.Chev.) A.Chev.	F	Raw form	–	Oral	Colon
		Juice	Milk		
Aloaceae					
<i>Aloe vera</i> (L.) Burm.f	Ap	Powder	Water	Oral	Leukemia/ Liver
		Powder mixed with honey	–		
		Vegetable oil	–		
		Juice	Water		
		Raw form	–		
Amaranthaceae					
<i>Beta vulgaris</i> L.	F	Raw form	–	Oral	Leukemia
Annonaceae					
<i>Annona cherimola</i> Mill.	F	Raw form	–	Oral	Breast
Apiaceae					
<i>Petroselinum crispum</i> (Mill.) Fuss	Ap	Decoction	Water	Oral	Uterus
	L	Infusion	Water		
<i>Cuminum cyminum</i> L.	St + L Sd	Infusion Powder	Water Water/ Oliveoil/ lemon juice	Oral	Stomach/ Liver
			–		
	F	Powder mixed with honey	Water		
		Powder	Water	Oral	Leukemia
<i>Apium graveolens</i> L.	L	Infusion	Water	Oral	Colon
<i>Ammi visnaga</i> (L.) Lam.	Fl	Decoction	Water	Oral	Colon/ Breast/ Leukaemia
<i>Foeniculum vulgare</i> Mill.	Sd	Powder mixed with honey	–	Oral	Colon/Lung Lung/ Leukemia
<i>Daucus carota</i> L.	F	Juice	Water	Oral	Colon Breast/ Prostate/ Liver
<i>Ammodaucus leucotrichus</i> Coss.	L + Fl	Powder	Water	Oral	Colon Breast/ Prostate/ Liver
<i>Pimpinella anisum</i> L.	Sd	Powder	Water	Oral	Colon
<i>Thapsia garganica</i> L.	R	Infusion	Water	Oral	Breast/ Prostate/ Liver
		Mixed with honey	–		
<i>Magydaris panacifolia</i> (Vahl.) Lange	–	Mixed with honey	–	Oral	Breast
Apocynaceae					
<i>Apteranthes europaea</i> (Guss.) Murb.	Ap	Powder	Rancid butter Milk/ Water	Oral	Uterus/ Breast/ Lung/ Leukemia
			–		
		Powder mixed with honey	–		
			Lemon juice		
		Juice	–		
Arecaceae					
<i>Phoenix dactylifera</i> L.	F	Raw form	–	Oral	Liver
Aristolochiaceae					
<i>Aristolochia longa</i> L.	R	Powder	Rancid butter/ Olive oil / Water/ Milk	Oral	Breast/ Uterus/ Colon/ Lung/ Bone/ Prostate/
			–		

Table 2 (continued)

Scientific name Family	Parts used	Preparation Modes	Solvent/ Excipient	Administraion route	Cancer type
		Powder mixed with honey	–		Ovary/ Stomach
		Raw form	Water		
Asteraceae		Decoction/ Infusion			
<i>Artemisia herba-alba</i> Asso.	L ; AP	Decoction/ Infusion	Water	Oral	Lung
		Powder mixed with honey	–	Poultice/ Oral Poultice	Colorectal
<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i> (L.)	L	Powder mixed with honey	–		
		Infusion	Water	Oral	
<i>Atractylis gummifera</i> L.	R	Incense	–	Inhalation	Lung
<i>Chamaemelum nobile</i> (L.) All.	F	Infusion	Water	Oral	Uterus
Berberidaceae					
<i>Berberis hispanica</i> Boiss. & Reut.	R/AP/St	Powder	Milk	Oral	Breast
		Powder mixed with honey	–		
Borraginacees					
<i>Borago officinalis</i> L.	AP /Sd	Powder	Water	Oral	Breast
Brassicaceae					
<i>Lepidium sativum</i> L.	Sd	Decoction Mixed with honey	Water	Oral	Lung/ Bone/Uterus
			–		
<i>Brassica oleracea</i> L.	Ap	Raw form	–	Oral	Breast
<i>Raphanus raphanistrum</i> subsp. sativus (L.) Domin	F	Raw forme	–	Oral	Leukemia
<i>Sinapis alba</i> L.	F	Powder	–	Oral	Colon
Cactaceae					
<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i> (L.) Mill.	F	Raw form	–	Oral	Bone/ Prostate
	C	Raw form	–		
		Juice	Water		
Camelliaceae					
<i>Camellia sinensis</i> (L.) Kuntze	L	Decotion/Infusion	Water (Sugar free)	Oral	Breast/ Bone
Cannabaceae					
<i>Cannabis sativa</i> L.	Sd	Powder mixed with honey	–	Oral	Brain
Capparidaceae					
<i>Capparis spinosa</i> L.	F	Powder	Vegetable oil/ Water	Oral	Breast/Uterus
			–		
Caryophyllaceae					
<i>Herniaria hirsuta</i> L.	Ap	Powder	Water	Oral	Leukemia
Cucurbitaceae					
<i>Citrullus lanatus</i> (Thunb.) Matsum. & Nakai	F	Juice	Water	Oral	Breast/ Leukemia
<i>Cucumis sativus</i> L.	F	Raw form	–	Oral	Leukemia
Ephedraceae					
<i>Ephedra alata</i> Decne	Ap	Decoction	Water	Oral	Breast
Euphorbiaceae					
<i>Euphorbia resinifera</i> O.Berg	Ap/R	Powder mixed with honey	–	Oral	Breast/ Lung/ Uterus/ Leukemia
		Decoction + Maceration with <i>Cicer arietinum</i>	Water/water	Oral	
Fabaceae					
<i>Vicia faba</i> L.	Sd	Powder mixed with honey	–	Oral	Breast
<i>Cicer arietinum</i> L.	F	Raw form	Water	Oral	Leukemia
<i>Vicia ervilia</i> (L.) Willd.	Sd	Powder	Milk	Oral	Breast
<i>Trigonella foenum-graecum</i> L.	Sd	Raw form	Water	Oral	Colon/ Breast/ Uterus/ Colon/ Lung/ Leukemia/ Stomach
		Powder infusion	Water	Oral	
		Powder mixed with honey	–		

(continued on next page)

Table 2 (continued)

Scientific name Family	Parts used	Preparation Modes	Solvent/ Excipient	Administraion route	Cancer type
<i>Glycyrrhiza glabra</i> L.	Ap	Powder mixed with honey	–	Oral	Breast/ Colon
Fagaceae <i>Quercus ilex</i> L.	F	Juice Steamed	Milk	Oral	Leukemia
Geraniaceae <i>Erodium guttatum</i> (Desf.) Willd.	R	Powder Powder mixed with honey	Milk	Oral	Bone
Lamiaceae <i>Marrubium vulgare</i> L.	Ap	Decoction/infusion Powder	Water Water	Oral	Colon/ Breast/ Uterus/ Leukaemia/ Stomach
<i>Ajuga iva</i> (L.) Schreb.	Fl	Powder mixed with honey Powder mixed with honey	– –	Oral	Breast
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> L.	L L	Powder Decoction/infusion	Water	Oral	Colon/ Breast/ Uterus/ Stomach
<i>Origanum vulgare</i> L.	Ap	Infusion	Water	Oral	Stomach
<i>Satureja granatensis</i> (Boiss. & Reut.) Sennen & Mauricio	Ap	Infusion	Water	Oral	Lung
<i>Salvia officinalis</i> L.	L	Infusion	Water	Oral	Lung/ Prostate
<i>Origanum majorana</i> L.	L	Powder Powder Infusion	Water Water Water	Oral	Breast
Lauraceae <i>Cinnamomum camphora</i> (L.) J.Presl		Powder	–	Oral	Uterus
Liliaceae <i>Allium sativum</i> L.	B	Cooked with chicken Juice Maceration	Olive oil Olive oil	Oral	Breast/ Uterus/ Colon/ leukemia / Prostate
<i>Allium cepa</i> L.	B	Raw form mixed with honey Cooked with chicken	– –	Oral	Leukemia/ Breast/ Uterus/ Colon/ Lung/ Prostate/ Ovary
<i>Drimia maritima</i> (L.) Stearn	R	Juice Maceration	Water Apple cider vinegar	Oral	Lung
<i>Allium ampeloprasum</i> L.	–	Infusion Infusion	Water Water	Oral	Breast
Linaceae <i>Linum usitatissimum</i> L.	Sd	Powder Powder/ Raw form mixed with honey Raw form	Olive oil /Water – Water	Oral	Breast/ Prostate/ Colon/ Leukemia/ Ovary
Malvaceae <i>Malva sylvestris</i> L.	Ap	cooked (dish)	–	Oral	Leukemia/ Breast
Meliaceae <i>Rubia cordifolia</i> L.	N	Raw form	–	Oral	Leukemia
Mimosaceae <i>Acacia raddiana</i> Savi	Rs	Infusion	Water		Leukemia
<i>Vachellia seyal</i> (Delile) P.J.H.Hurter	Rs	Infusion	Water	Oral	Leukemia
Moraceae <i>Ficus carica</i> L.	F	Powder mixed with honey Maceration (One week)	– Olive oil	Oral	Lung/ Prostate/ Breast/ Uterus

Table 2 (continued)

Scientific name Family	Parts used	Preparation Modes	Solvent/ Excipient	Administraion route	Cancer type
Myrtaceae <i>Eugenia caryophyllata</i> Thunb.	Sd	Powder	Water	Oral	Stomach
Oleaceae <i>Olea europaea</i> L.	F	vegetable oil	–	Oral	Breast/ Colon/ Stomach/ Leukemia/ Uterus/ Lung/
	L	Decoction	Water		
Pedaliaceae <i>Sesamum indicum</i> L.	Sd	Powder mixed with honey	–	Oral	Lung/ Pancreatic
Pinaceae <i>Cedrus atlantica</i> (Endl.) Manetti ex Carrière	F	Powder mixed with honey	–	Oral	Lung
<i>Pinus halepensis</i> Mill.	St + L	Decoction/Infusion	Water	Oral	Lung
Piperaceae <i>Piper nigrum</i> L.	Sd	Powder (spice)	–	Oral	Breast/Colon
Poaceae <i>Hordeum vulgare</i> L.	Sd	Powder (Soup ; Bread)	Water + Milk	Oral	Colon
		Infusion	Water		
<i>Triticum aestivum</i> L.	Sd	Powder (Bread)	Water	Oral	Colon/ Stomach
		Infusion			
Portulacaceae <i>Portulaca oleracea</i> L.	Ap	cooked (dish)	–	Oral	Stomach
Punicaceae <i>Punica granatum</i> L.	E M	Decoction/Infusion Raw form	Water –	Oral	Breast
Ranunculaceae <i>Nigella sativa</i> L.	Sd	Powder Powder mixed with honey Infusion	Milk – Water	Oral	Colon/ Breast/ Leukemia/ Uterus/ Lung
Rhamnaceae <i>Ziziphus jujube</i> Mill.	F	Powder mixed with honey	–	Oral	Breast
Rosaceae <i>Fragaria</i> × <i>ananassa</i> (Duchesne ex Weston) Duchesne ex Rozier	F	Raw form	–	Oral	Breast
Rutaceae <i>Citrus aurantium</i> L.	F	Juice	–	Oral	Breast/ Colon/ Lung
Solanaceae <i>Solanum lycopersicum</i> L. <i>Solanum tuberosum</i> L.	F –	Raw form Juice	– Water	Oral Oral	Prostate Breast
Urticaceae <i>Urtica dioica</i> L.	L	Infusion	Water	Oral	Leukemia
Vitaceae <i>Vitis vinifera</i> L.	F	Raw form	–	Oral	Breast/ Uterus/ Leukemia
Zingiberaceae <i>Curcuma longa</i> L.	R	Powder	tea/Milk/Water/ Spice	Oral	Breast/ Leukemia/ Uterus/ Colon/ Stomach/ Lung/ Bone
	St	Decoction/ Mixed with honey	Water/ Lemon juice		
<i>Zingiber officinale</i> Roscoe	Ap	Decoction	Water	Oral	Breast/Colon/ Prostate/ Uterus
	R	Raw form Powder mixed with honey	Water –		

(continued on next page)

Table 2 (continued)

Scientific name Family	Parts used	Preparation Modes	Solvent/ Excipient	Administraion route	Cancer type
<i>Elettaria cardamomum</i> (L.) Maton Zygophyllaceae	Sd	Powder	Orange juice	Oral	Breast
<i>Peganum harmala</i> L.	Sd/St	Powder/ mixed with honey	Pomegr nate juice / Apple juice	Oral	Lung / Breast

Ap : Aerial part ; B : Bulb ; C : Cladode ; E : Exocarp ; F : fruits ; Fl : Flowers ; L : Leaves ;
M : Mesocarp ; N : Nut ; Rs : Resin ; R : Roots ; Sd : Seeds ; Sh : Shoot ; St : Stem ; T : Tubers ; Wp : Whole plant.

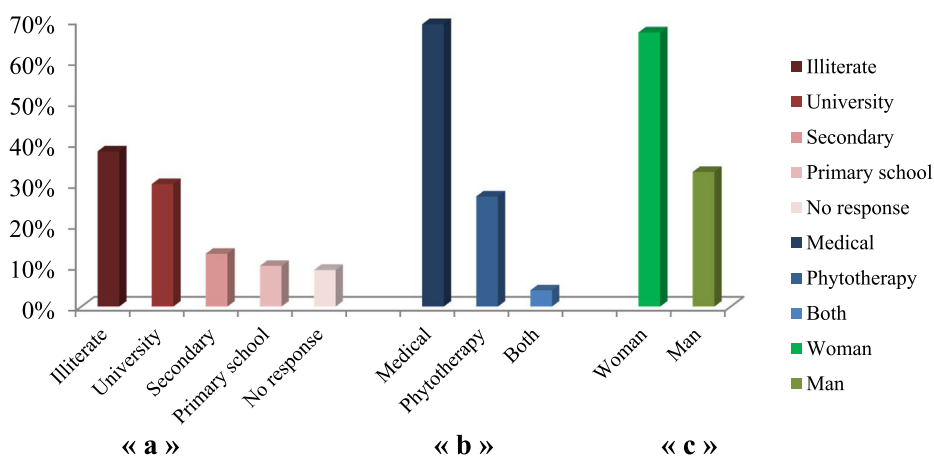


Fig. 2. General profile of informants (Fez-Meknes Region).

aware of side effects of the uncontrolled use of plants in the treatment, potential toxicities of plants, lack of scientific validity for plants randomly used in the treatment (González-Tejero et al., 2008).

« a »: Educational Level; « b »: Healthcare choices; « c »: Gender of informants

In the present research work, we found that the the mostly used plants for the treatment of cancer in the region are prepared into powder form 35 %, infusion 20 %, raw form 15 %, decoction 11 %, juice 9 %, maceration 3 %, cooked 3 % and vegetable oil 2 % and

incense 1 % (Fig. 3). 95 % of remedies are taken orally (Fig. 4). Fruits are the mostly used plant parts with a percentage of 23.53 %, followed by leaves 18.63 %, aerial parts, and seeds 15.69 % in each, roots 8.82 %, stems 5.88 %, flowers 3.92 %. However, Bulb, resin, cladode, mesocarp, exocarp, and nut are rarely used (Fig. 5).

F : fruits ; L : Leaves ; Ap : Aerial part ; Sd : Seeds ; R : Roots ; St : Stem ; Fl : Flowers ; B : Bulb ; Rs : Resin ; C : Cladode ; M : Mesocarp ; E : Exocarp ; N : Nut.

The most useful plant families for the treatment of cancer in the Fez-Meknes region are Apiaceae (10 species), followed by Lami-

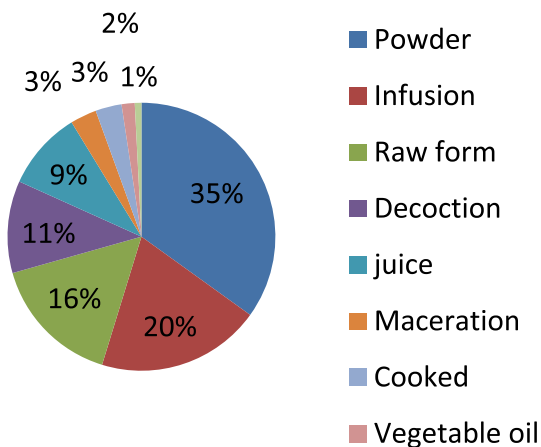


Fig. 3. Mode of preparation.

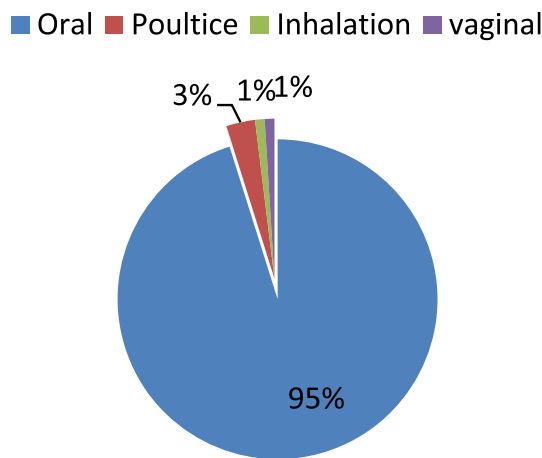


Fig. 4. Mode of administration.

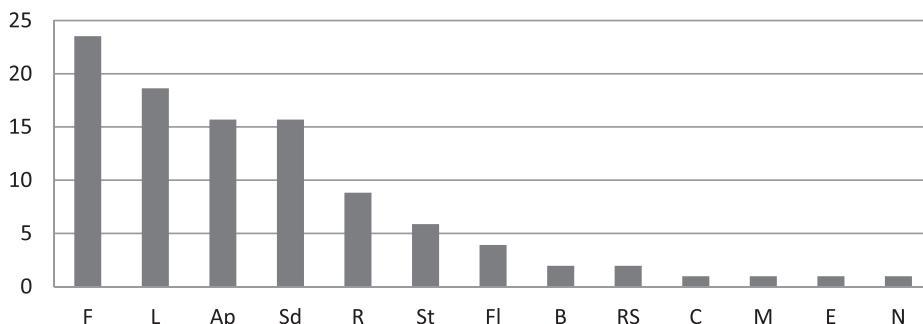


Fig. 5. Percentage of plant parts used for cancer treatment in the study area.

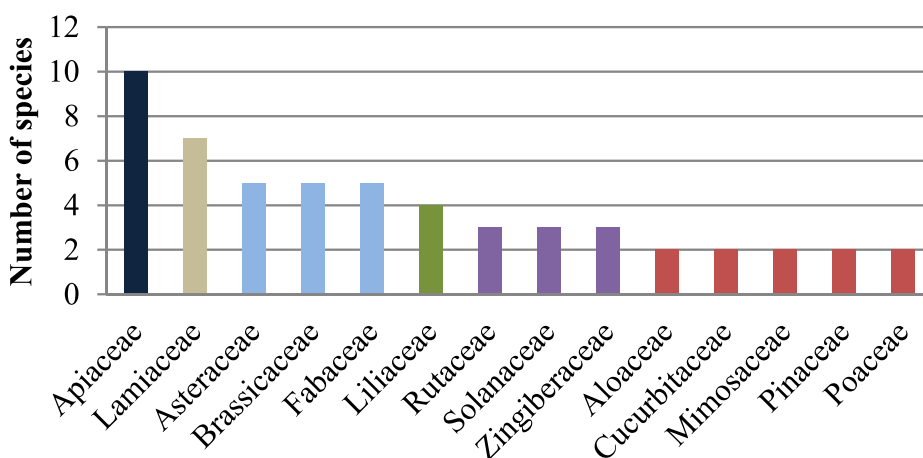


Fig. 6. Number of plant species per family.

Table 3
Distribution of informants according to age group.

Age range	Percentage %
[19–20]	2.33
[21–30]	31.67
[31–40]	23.33
[41–50]	17.33
[51–60]	15.33
greater than 60	73
No answer	

aceae (7 species), Asteraceae, Brassicaceae, Fabaceae (5 species in each), and Liliaceae (4 species) (Fig. 6). This ethnobotanical survey disagrees with another survey conducted in the Greater Casablanca region which reported that Aristolochiaceae is the most common plant families used in the traditional treatment of cancer (Bourhia et al., 2019).

The results of the present survey showed that 31.67 % of respondents were aged between 21 and 30 years, 23.33 % between 31 and 40 years, 17.33 % between 41 and 50 years, and 15.33 % between 51 and 60 years (Table 3). These results are in accordance with the earlier literature (Agyare et al., 2018).

The treatment of cancer with traditional medicines in the study area goes back to many decades ago according to the informant's response. The results of the present survey summarize the old traditional use of herbal medicine in fighting cancer in the Fez Meknes region (Table 4).

Anticancer activity of the main reported plants in our survey against breast, leukemic, cervical lymphoma, laryngeal, lung, liver, and kidney cancers has already been investigated in previous

research works to have significant anticancer effects under both *in vitro* and *in vivo* conditions as shown in Table 5. *Apteranthes europaea* (Guss.), *Nigella sativa* L., *Zingiber officinale* Roscoe, *Petroselinum crispum* (Mill.) Fuss, and *Capparis spinosa* L. showed an antiproliferative activity on breast cancer cell lines (Amrati et al., 2020a); (Periasamy et al., 2016); (Rahman et al., 2011); (Farshori et al., 2013); (Aljaiyash et al., 2014), *Artemisia herba-alba* Asso, *Allium cepa* L., and *Olea europaea* L. on leukemic cell lines (Khelifi et al., 2013); (Votto et al., 2010); (Fares et al., 2011). *Marrubium vulgare* L. and *Linum usitatissimum* L. on cervical cancer cells (Zarai et al., 2011); (Joseph et al., 2020) by the time *Aristolochia longa* L. and *Curcuma longa* L. on lung cancer (Hinou et al., 1990); (Wu et al., 2010). *Trigonella foenum-graecum* L. found effective vs. T-cell lymphoma (Alsemari et al., 2014). *Berberis hispanica* Boiss. & Reut. vs. human laryngeal cancer cells Hep-2 (Boudjlida et al., 2019). *In vivo* tests showed an important effect of *Allium sativum* L. on the reduction of the frequency progression of colorectal adenocarcinoma and bladder cancers (Wargovich, 1987) (Table 5).

Some plant species are used against cancer in the study area despite their toxicities such as *Apteranthes europaea* Guss (Issiki et al., 2017), *Aristolochia longa* L. (Benarba et al., 2017), *Capparis spinosa* L. (Fanoudi et al., 2017), *Nigella sativa* L. (Zaoui et al., 2002), *Artemisia herba-alba* Asso. (Bertella et al., 2018), *Berberis hispanica* Boiss. & Reut. (Kheir et al., 2010), *Peganum harmala* L. (Lamchouri et al., 2002), *Origanum vulgare* L. (Yazdani et al., 2014), *Urginea maritima* (L.) Baker (Tuncok et al., 1995), *Citrus aurantium* L. (Arbo et al., 2009), and *Rosmarinus officinalis* L. (Anadón et al., 2008) (Table 5).

In the present survey, many respondents have little data regarding plant toxicities due to illiteracy (Fig. 2.a) and the limited understanding of product toxicity. Collected data reported some

Table 4
Recipes used to treat cancer in the fez-Meknes region.

Recipe	Scientific name	Preparation mode	Administration route
Jeljlān	<i>Sesamum indicum</i> L.	Powders mixed with olive oil	Oral
Sanouj Ikhal	<i>Nigella sativa</i> L.		
Sanouj Ihmar	<i>Lepidium sativum</i> L.		
Habat lhalwa	<i>Pimpinella anisum</i> L.	Powder	Oral
Fliyo	<i>Mentha pulegium</i> L.	Powder	
Zaatar	<i>Origanum vulgare</i> L.	Powder	
Zītra	<i>Satureja granatensis</i> (Boiss. & Reut.) Sennen & Mauricio		
Haba souda	<i>Nigella sativa</i> L.	Powder	Oral
Tūma	<i>Allium sativum</i> L.	Raw form (Mixed with honey)	
Merrīwut	<i>Marrubium vulgare</i> L.	Powder	Vaginal inhalation
Magraman	<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i> (L.)	Powder	
Khizou	<i>Daucus carota</i> L.	Maceration of the seeds in the water then mix with the banana juice	Oral
Homms	<i>Cicer arietinum</i> L.		
Laft	<i>Brassica rapa</i> L.		
Kebbar	<i>Capparis spinosa</i> L.		
Jeljlān	<i>Sesamum indicum</i> L.		
Horiga	<i>Urtica dioica</i> L.	Raw form (Leaves)	Oral
Marrīwet	<i>Marrubium vulgare</i> L.	Raw form (Aerial part) (Mixed with olive oil)	
Zit Zaytūn	<i>Olea europaea</i> L.		
hiyār	<i>Cucumis sativus</i> L.	Juice	Oral
Kiwi	<i>Actinidia chinensis</i> var. <i>deliciosa</i> (A.Chev.) A.Chev.		
	<i>Petroselinum crispum</i> (Mill.) Fuss		
Ma'adnūs	<i>Aristolochia longa</i> L.	Powder	Oral
pBerraztem	<i>Nigella sativa</i> L.	Powder (Mixed with honey)	
Lhaba souda	<i>Nigella sativa</i> L.	Powder	
Tūma	<i>Allium sativum</i> L.	Raw form	Oral
Lhaba souda	<i>Nigella sativa</i> L.	Powder	
Bṭāṭa	<i>Solanum tuberosum</i> L.	Boiled and plucked	oral
hizzu	<i>Daucus carota</i> L.		
Barba	<i>Beta vulgaris</i> L.		
Krāfes	<i>Apium graveolens</i> L.		
tūma	<i>Allium sativum</i> L.	Raw form	oral
Skenjbir	<i>Zingiber officinale</i> Roscoe	Powder (Mixed with eggs)	
ma'adnūs	<i>Petroselinum crispum</i> (Mill.) Fuss	Raw form	Oral
	<i>Allium cepa</i> L.	Raw form	
l-beṣla hamra	<i>Allium cepa</i> L.	Raw form	
Khorchf	<i>Cynara cardunculus</i> L.	Raw form (Steems)	Oral
sekoum	<i>Euphorbia resinifera</i> O.Berg	Powder (roots, steems) + Water	
borrō	<i>Allium ampeloprasum</i> L.	mixed with honey and lemon juice	Oral
ma'adnūs	<i>Petroselinum crispum</i> (Mill.) Fuss		

Table 5
Literature about medicinal plants used to fight cancer in the Fez-Meknes region.

Plants	The medical interest of the inventoried plants according to the literature	Ethnopharmacological use
<i>Apteranthes europaea</i> (Guss.) Murb.	Cytotoxic activity on MDA-MB-231 and MCF-7 lin cells of breast cancer (Amrati et al., 2020b).	Anti-inflammatory, ulcer,
<i>Aristolochia longa</i> L.	Apoptogenic activity on Burkitt's lymphoma BL41 cells (Benarba et al., 2012). Cytotoxic activity against lymphocytic leukemia (P-388) and bronchial epidermoid carcinoma of human origin (NSCLCN6) (Hinou et al., 1990).	antidiabetic, and anti-bacterial (Adnan et al., 2014) Abortifacient, sedative, analgesic, anti-inflammatory, anti-feedant, muscle relaxant, antihistaminic, and anti-allergic (Benarba and Meddah, 2014).
<i>Nigella sativa</i> L.	Anticancer activity on human breast cancer cells: MCF-7 (Periasamy et al., 2016).	Treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, diabetes, asthma, Obesity, and other metabolic disorders (Namazi et al., 2018).
<i>Allium sativum</i> L.	Anticancer effect on human lung carcinoma (A549), larynx epidermoid carcinoma (HEp-2), colon adenocarcinoma (HT-29), and pancreas carcinoma (MIA PaCa-2) (Rooney and Ryan, 2005). Reduction of the frequency progression of colorectal adenocarcinoma (Wargovich, 1987)	Prevention and treatment of atherosclerosis, cardiovascular, hyperlipidemia, thrombosis, hypertension, microbial infections, diabetes, and asthma (Lyantagaye, 2011).
<i>Marrubium vulgare</i> L.	Treatment of bladder cancer (Lamm and Riggs, 2000) Cytotoxic activity against the cervical cancer lines: HeLa cells (Zarai et al., 2011).	Neurosedative and anti-inflammatory (Sahpaz et al., 2002).
<i>Trigonella foenum-graecum</i> L.	Cytotoxic effect against T-cell lymphoma (Alsemari et al., 2014).	Antidiabetic, carminative, tonic, and antinociceptive (Hamza et al., 2012); (Javan et al., 1997); (Zia et al., 2001).
<i>Artemisia herba-alba</i> Asso.	Antiproliferative activity against P815 and BSR kidney carcinoma cell lines (Tilaoui et al., 2015).	Treatment of infectious diseases, inflammatory disorders (colds, coughing, bronchitis, diarrhea), diabetes, neuralgias, antiseptic and against skin diseases, scabies, syphilis, fever as well as menstrual and nervous disorders (Abu-Darwish et al., 2015).
<i>Allium cepa</i> L.	Anticancer activity against human bladder carcinoma RT112, and human myelogenous leukemia K562 (Khelifi et al., 2013). Cytotoxic activity vs. multidrug resistant erythroleukemic cell lines: (Lucena and K562) (Votto et al., 2010). Apoptosis and suppression of Bcl-2 through inhibition of PI3K/Akt Signaling Pathway in AGS human cancer cells (Lee et al., 2014).	Blood purifier, infectious diseases, digestive problems, skin diseases, metabolic disease, insect bites (Teshika et al., 2018).
<i>Berberis hispanica</i> Boiss. & Reut.	Apoptotic effect in human laryngeal cancer cells Hep-2 (Boudjida et al., 2019).	Treatment of gastrointestinal affections, liver inflammation, and biliary disorders (el Hamsas el Youbi, 2011)
<i>Zingiber officinale</i> Roscoe	Ameliorate chemotherapy- induced nausea and vomiting (Jagetia et al., 2003). Anticancer activity against human breast carcinoma cell lines (MCF-7 cancer cells and MDA-MB-231 (Rahman et al., 2011). Effect on cancer cell growth of human Hela cancer cells (Cheng et al., 2011).	Treatment of airway infections, nausea, and spasm (Moghaddasi and Haddad Kashani, 2012), (Chang et al., 2013).
<i>Petroselinum crispum</i> (Mill.) Fuss	Induction cell death in MCF-7 cells (Farshori et al., 2013). Reduction of the cell viability of HepG2 (Human Hepatocellular Carcinoma Cells) (Farshori et al., 2014).	Treatment of gastrointestinal disorder, inflammation, halitosis, kidney stone, amenorrhoea, dermatitis, headcool, vision performance, hemorrhoid (Farzaei et al., 2013).
<i>Olea europaea</i> L.	Anti-proliferative activity on human leukemic cell line (Jurkat) (Fares et al., 2011). Anti-cancer effect on human BRAF melanoma cells (Ruzzolini et al., 2018).	Hypertension, <u>inflammatory diseases</u> , diabetes, diarrhea, <u>respiratory and urinary tract infections</u> , stomach, <u>intestinal diseases</u> , asthma, and <u>rheumatism</u> (Scheffler et al., 2008), (Song et al., 2019).
<i>Curcuma longa</i> L.	Cytotoxic activity against lymphocytes and Dalton's lymphoma cells (Kuttan et al., 1985). Anti-tumor activity against Ehrlich ascites tumour (Ruby et al., 1995). Induction of apoptosis in human cell lung cancer NCI-H460 cells 37 (Wu et al., 2010).	Biliary disorders, anorexia, cough, diabetic wounds, hepatic disorders, rheumatism and sinusitis (Kumar and Sakhya, 2013).
<i>Linum usitatissimum</i> L.	Anticancer effect against Human cervical cancer cell line: Hela cells (Joseph et al., 2020). Inhibition of Jeg3 cell growth by the phytoestrogens isolated from <i>Linum usitatissimum</i> L. (Abarzua et al., 2007).	Diarrhea, gastrointestinal infections, asthma, cough, bronchitis, pneumonia, renal colic, renal calculi, rheumatic swelling (Khan et al., 2017).
<i>Capparis spinosa</i> L.	Cytotoxic activity against both breast and colon cell lines: MCF-7 and HCT-116 (Aljayyash et al., 2014).	The treatment of rheumatism, gout and abdominal pains (Maresca et al., 2016).
<i>Erodium guttatum</i> (Desf.) Willd.	No data	Wound healing (Helmstädter, 2017).
<i>Camellia sinensis</i> (L.) Kuntze	Suppression of the growth of prostate cancer (HH870 and DU145) and epithelial ovarian cancer cell lines (HH450 and HH639) (Ravindranath et al., 2006).	Stimulant, diuretic, astringent, heart health, flatulence, regulating body temperature and blood sugar, promoting digestion, and improving mental processes (Chopade et al., 2008).
<i>Origanum vulgare</i> L.	Anticancer activity against cervical cancer line: Hella cells (Koldas et al., 2015). Apoptosis in human colon cancer caco2 cells (Savini et al., 2009).	Treatment of respiratory, cutaneous infections, igestive disorders, headaches, sore throats or colds (Vale-Silva et al., 2012), (de Torre et al., 2020).

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Table 5 (continued)

Plants	The medical interest of the inventoried plants according to the literature	Ethnopharmacological use
<i>Salvia officinalis</i> L.	Cytotoxic activity on colon cancer: HCT-116 cells (El Hadri et al., 2010).	Treatment of emmenagogue, cold, throat infections, skin diseases, ulcers, laryngitis, inflammation, bronchitis and Alzheimer's disease (Sharma et al., 2019).
<i>Peganum harmala</i> L.	Antitumor effect on Lewis Lung, sarcoma180 and HepA tumor (Chen et al., 2005) Antiproliferative effect on leukemic cell line cells of Jurkat (Lamchouri et al., 2013)	Antihypertensive, blood purifier, Antidiarrheal, intestinal pain, Antispasmodic in colic, Against nervousity, Emmenagogue, antalgic, Antidiabetic, Anti-pyretic (Moloudizargari et al., 2013).
<i>Lepidium sativum</i> L.	Apoptosis in human breast cancer cells: MCF-7 cell lines (Mahassni and Al-Reemi, 2013).	Treatment of chronic liver and spleen complaints, inflammatory rheumatic pains, skin diseases, asthma, diarrhea (Divanji et al., 2011).
<i>Opuntia ficus-indica</i> (L.) Mill.	Anticancer activity on Ehrlich ascites carcinoma cells (Abou-Elella and Ali, 2014). Apoptosis activity in human chronic myeloid leukemia Cell line-K562 (Sreekanth et al., 2007).	Treatment of burns, wounds, edema, diabetes, obesity, indigestion, hyperlipidemy, viral and inflammatory infections (Kaur et al., 2012).
<i>Rosmarinus officinalis</i> L.	Antiproliferative effect on human ovarian cancer cells (A2780 and A2780CP70) (Tai et al., 2012). Anticancer Effect on CaCo-2 colon cancer cells (Moore et al., 2016).	Analgesic, anti-inflammatory, anti-rheumatic, spasmolytic, carminative and choleric applications (Minaiyan et al., 2011).
<i>Ficus carica</i> L.	Anti-angiogenic activity on human umbilical vein endothelial cells (Mostafaie et al., 2011)	Treatment of gastrointestinal disorders (colic, indigestion, loss of appetite, and diarrhea), respiratory (sore throats, cough, and bronchial problems), inflammatory, and cardiovascular disorders (Mawa et al., 2013).
<i>Punica granatum</i> L.	Induction of apoptosis in prostate cancer cell line (Sineh Sepehr et al., 2012). Anticancer activity on human cancer cell lines melanoma (A375), colon cancer (HCT116), and hepatocellular carcinoma (HepG2) (Joseph et al., 2013).	Treatment of <u>atherosclerosis</u> , diabetes, hypertension, <u>hyperlipidemia</u> , cancer, <u>peptic ulcer</u> and oral diseases (Ge et al., 2021).
<i>Cuminum cyminum</i> L.	Cytotoxic activity against colon cancer cells (502713, Colo-205, Hep-2, A-549, OVCAR-5, PC-5, SF-295) (Prakash and Gupta, 2014).	Treatment of asthma, bronchitis, rheumatism, hypolipidemia, cancer, diabetes and other inflammatory diseases (Mnif and Aifa, 2015), (Srinivasan, 2018).
<i>Apium graveolens</i> L.	Anticancer activity vs. rhabdomyosarcom (RD) and murine (L20B) (AL-Jumaily, 2018).	Treatment of spasm, stomach problems, used also as diuretic, laxative, and sedative, and to lower the blood pressure (Al-Asmari et al., 2017).
<i>Daucus carota</i> L.	Antiproliferative effect on human Lymphoid Leukaemia Cells 67 (Zaini et al., 2012). Anticancer effect against human colon (HT-29, Caco-2) and breast (MCF-7, MDA-MB-231) cancer cell (Shebaby et al., 2013).	Treatment of gastric disorders, acidity and gastric ulcers (Nayeem et al., 2010)
<i>Dittrichia viscosa</i> (L.)	Antiproliferative and apoptosis effects on breast cancer cells (MCF-7) (Talib et al., 2012).	Wound healing, <u>herniated disc</u> , stomachache, anticancer, <u>kidney pain</u> , <u>kidney stones</u> , skin, hair, eye ailments and cancer (Sevgi et al., 2021).
<i>Sinapis alba</i> L.	Anticancer effect on colon cancer cell lines (SW480) (Yuan et al., 2011). Suppression of colonic cancer (Zhu et al., 2012).	Anti-tumor, antiviral, and analgesic agent (Mitrović et al., 2020).
<i>Origanum majorana</i> L.	Apoptotic and anti-proliferative activity on human lymphoblastic leukemic cell line (Jurkat) (Abdel-Massih et al., 2010).	Treatment of insomnia, gastritis, asthma and nervousness (Singla and Vasudeva, 2015).
<i>Origanum vulgare</i> L.	Anticancer activity on human lung cancer cell line (A549) (Sankar et al., 2013).	Digestive and circulatory stimulant, antispasmodic, calmative, carminative, diaphoretic, expectorant, stomachic agent (de Torre et al., 2020).
<i>Hordeum vulgare</i> L.	Inhibition of oxidative DNA damage and apoptosis (J. B. Jeong et al., 2009). Antitumor effect in mammary carcinogenesis (Kubatka et al., 2016).	Treatment of inflammatory, cardiovascular diseases, obesity, diabetes, <u>circulatory disorders</u> , arthritis, anemia, excessive cholesterol levels, renal difficulties, and cancer (Gul et al., 2014), (Thatiparthi et al., 2019).
<i>Vitis vinifera</i> L.	Anticancer effect on liver (HepG2) and cervical (HeLa) cancer cells (Apostolou et al., 2013).	Treatment of diarrhea, hepatitis and stomachaches (Aouey et al., 2016).
<i>Ephedra alata</i> Decne	Antiproliferative and pro-apoptotic potential against the MCF-7 breast cancer cell line (Danciu et al., 2018).	Treatment of allergies, asthma, colds, coughs, edema, fever, headaches, and nasal congestion (Mighri et al., 2019).
<i>Drimia maritima</i> (L.) Stearn	Cytotoxicity on lung cancer cell lines (A549) (Bozcuk et al., 2011).	No data
<i>Pinus halepensis</i> Mill.	Antiangiogenic activity on adenocarcinoma of human basal epithelial cells (A549), human colon adenocarcinoma (HCT15) and human myeloma (HL60) (Kadri et al., 2014).	Treatment of diarrhea, wounds, rheumatism, cough, gastrointestinal illnesses, hypertension, and hemorrhoids, used also as antiseptic, astringent, antifungal, and anti-tuberculosis (El Omari et al., 2021).
<i>Urtica dioica</i> L.	Antiproliferative activity on human prostate cancer cells (LNCaP, hPCPs) (Konrad et al., 2000).	Used as antihypertensive blood purifier, emmenagogue, diuretic, as well as to treat menstrual hemorrhage, rheumatism, and eczema (Testai et al., 2002), (Ilhan et al., 2019)
<i>Citrus aurantium</i> L.	Induction of G2/M phase arrest and apoptosis in human gastric cancer AGS Cells (Lee et al., 2012). Induction of the cell cycle arrest and apoptosis in lung cancer cells (A549) (Park et al., 2012). Cytotoxic effect on human colorectal carcinoma cell line (lim1863) (Odeh et al., 2012).	Treatment of influenza, insomnia, used also as tranquilizer, cardiovascular analeptic, and antispasmodic (Karthikeyan, 2014).

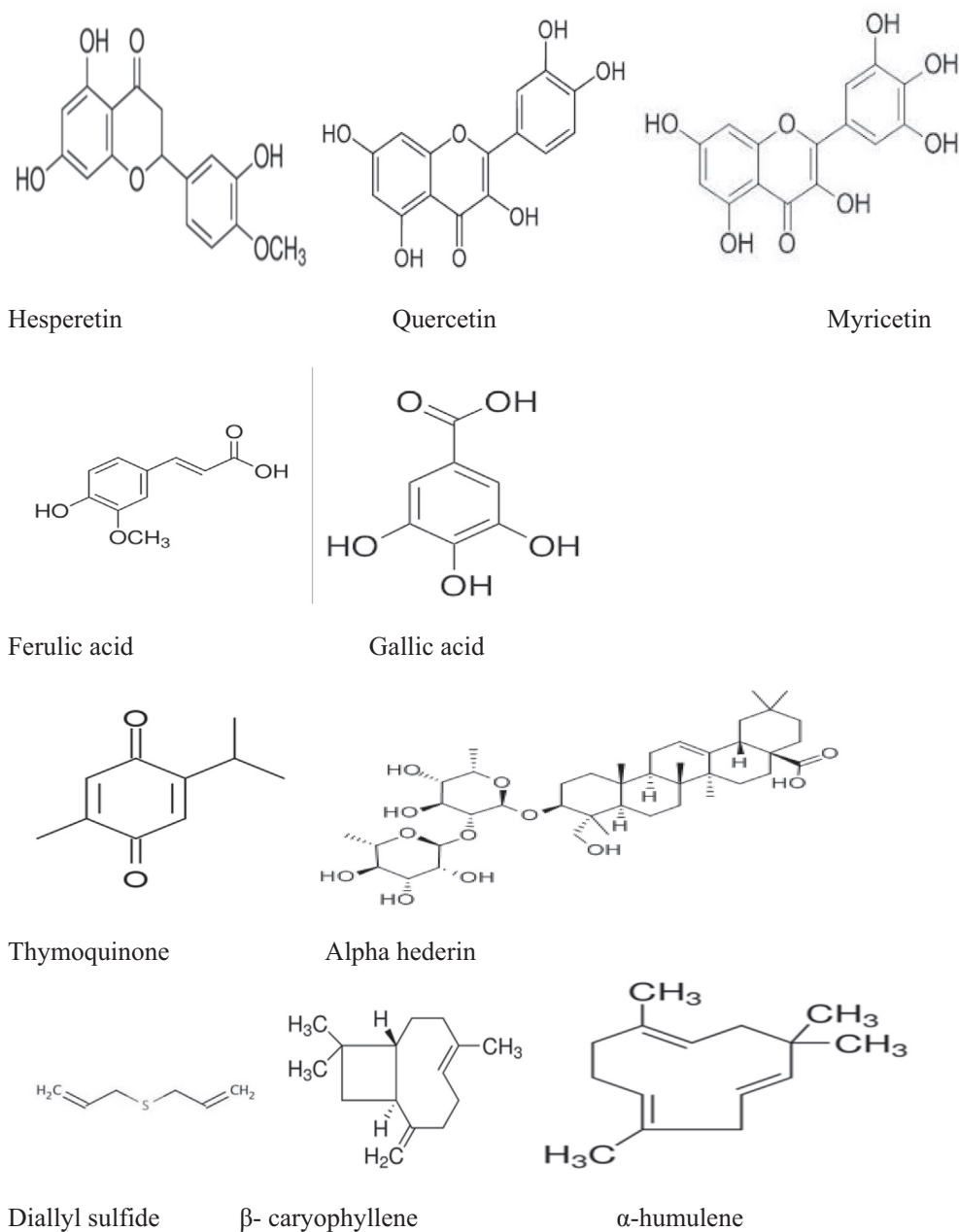


Fig 7. Chemical structures of compounds involved in the anticancer effect of some inventoried plant species.

contradiction in terms of the efficiency and toxicity of some reported plants .i.e. genus *Aristolochia* was highly recommended by the informants to treat cancer by contrast many scientific studies have demonstrated severe toxic effects with irreversible kidney tissue lesions induced by aristolochic acid contained in this genus. This phenomenon reflects some misunderstanding of traditional medicine based on traditions rather than sciences. It is thus researchers should work on creating awareness among people regarding the inconvenience of plant use without scientific validity.

The antitumor effect of some bioactive compounds contained in the inventoried plants was also discussed in the previous works. Previously published literature investigated the chemical compounds related to potential anticancer effects of some inventoried plant species in the current research such as hesperetin (Choi, 2007), quercetin, myricetin (Lu et al., 2006), ferulic acid (Yang

et al., 2015), and gallic acid (Chen et al., 2009) contained in *Apteranthes europaea* (Guss.) Murb (Amrati et al., 2020a), (Amrati et al., 2021), aristolochic acid I (AAsI) and aristolactam Ia (ALiA) in *Aristolochia longa* L. (Hinou et al., 1990), thymoquinone, and alpha-hederin in *Nigella sativa* L. (Rooney and Ryan, 2005); (Adamska et al., 2019), diallyl sulfide in *Allium sativum* L. (Wargovich, 1987), β -caryophyllene and α -humulene components in *Marrubium vulgare* L. (Fidyt et al., 2016); (El Hadri et al., 2010); protodioscin in *Trigonella foenum-graecum* L. [31; 100] (Ma et al., 2019); (Alsemari et al., 2014) flavonoids and tannins in *Artemisia herba-alba* Asso (Khlifi et al., 2013), quercetin in *Allium cepa* L. (Votto et al., 2010), 6-gingerol, and 6-shogaol in *Zingiber officinale* Roscoe (C.-H. Jeong et al., 2009); (Wu et al., 2015); (Cheng et al., 2011); Oleuropein in *Olea europaea* L. (Ruzzolini et al., 2018), curcuminoids in *Curcuma longa* L. (Anto et al., 1995); (Hsiao et al., 2018); glabranine and naringenin in *Linum usitatissimum* L.

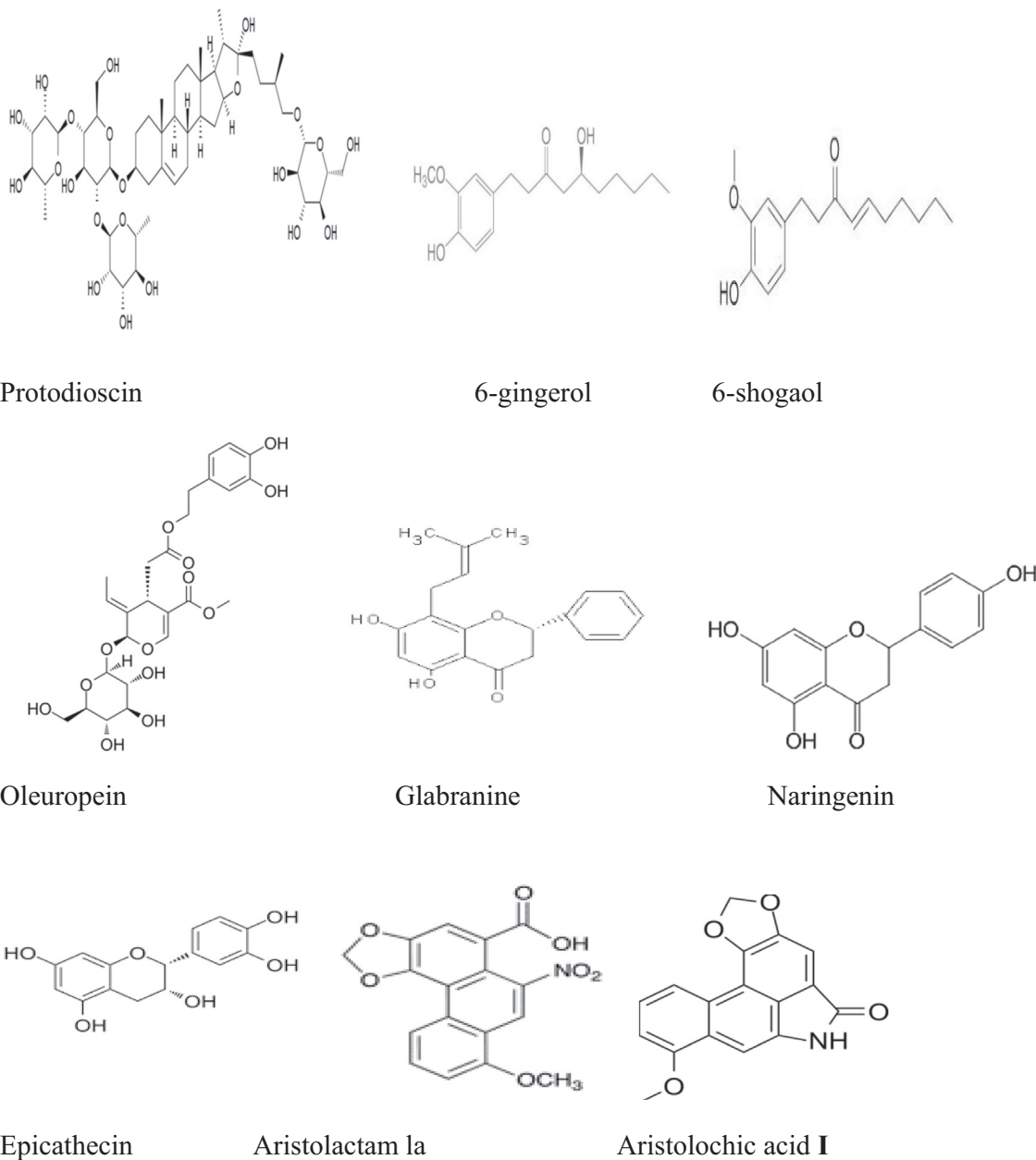


Fig. 7 (continued)

(Joseph et al., 2020), and Epicatechins in *Camellia sinensis* (L.) Kuntze (Ravindranath et al., 2006); (Bitu Pinto et al., 2015). The chemical structures of the mentioned compounds are presented in Fig. 7.

In the present survey, many respondents have little data regarding plant toxicities due to illiteracy and the limited understanding of product toxicity. Collected data reported some contradiction in terms of the efficiency and toxicity of some reported plants. i.e. genus *Aristolochia* was highly recommended by the informants to treat cancer by contrast many scientific studies have demonstrated severe toxic effects with irreversible kidney tissue lesions induced by Aristolochic acid contained in this genus. This phenomenon reflects some misunderstanding of traditional medicine based on traditions rather than sciences. For this reason, researchers should work on creating awareness among people regarding the inconvenience of plant use without scientific validity.

4. Conclusion

The present survey provides comprehensive data about the medicinal plant used in the Fez-Meknes region in Morocco for cancer treatment. The outcome of the present work showed that traditional medicines are still largely used among the rural and urban tribes of the region as a weapon to fight cancer. This study makes its way to contribute towards society as it provides a detailed study on the medicinal plants including plant parts used, mode of preparation, route of administration, as well as doses that find a place in cancer-fighting. This work hoping to constitute valuable data that can serve as medicines to develop natural anticancer compounds.

Author's contribution

F.E.Z., M.B., M.S.: writing the original Draft. A.M.S., A.A., R.U.: reviewing, and editing. A.B.,D.B.: Supervision and data validation

Declaration of Competing Interest

The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper.

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