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Reduction in the Liver Size Indicated the Hepatic Toxicity of *Jatropha tanjorensis*

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Plants are used in the modern era for the extraction and development of many drugs which enhance the traditional use of herbal remedies (UNESCO, 1998). Eighty percent of the world's population directly and indirectly depend upon the medicinal herbs and need necessary advice from their physician regarding their use (O'Hara *et al.*, 1998). Herbal plants are considered safe and affordable than synthetic alternative because they have lesser side effects, reduced cost and readily availability (Iwu *et al.*, 1999; Karim *et al.*, 2011). So, the increased demand of the medicinal herbs needs some security measures for their protective therapeutic usage. *Jatropha tanjorensis* is a herbaceous plant of Euphorbiaceae family and commonly called Catholic vegetable, Iyana-ipaja, lapalapa (Iwalewa *et al.*, 2005). It also provided a link between phenotypic characters of *J. gossypifolia* and *J. curcas* (Prabakaran and Sujatha, 1999). The leaf of *J. tanjorensis* has been used as a vegetable and for the treatment of diabetic in Nigeria (Olayiwola *et al.*, 2004). Previous researches indicated their pharmacological values and toxicological effects and some claimed that this plant is toxic to the organs of the human body (Ehimwenma and Osagie, 2007).

A research has been conducted by the Nigerian scientist and published in the Research Journal of Medicinal Plant 3 (1): 29-33, 2009 with an aim to access the toxic effect of *J. tanjorensis* on biochemical and ultra-sonographic analysis in rabbits. The result indicated that there was no significant difference in the rabbit's weight during the experiments and reduction in the serum urea concentration has been noted that verified the interference of *J. tanjorensis* powder in the filtration function of the kidney in rabbits. The ultrasound picture of kidney, heart and spleen showed no significant change while reduction in the size of the liver with increased echogenicity have been observed which indicated hepatic toxicity of this plant.

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